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THE ENGLISH REFORMED CHURCH AT
HAMBURGH.

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Such was the language in which the Hebrews, in the bitter consciousness of their captivity, and in the equally bitter remembrance of their past prosperity, replied to the taunts of their insolent oppressors. They thought on the land of their fathers, now desolate—on the "beautiful house" in which they had worshipped, "now consumed with fire;" and they "wept when they remembered Zion."

Happily the world furnishes comparatively few instances of utter desolation comparable to this. Few, therefore, can appreciate that all-absorbing, maddening sorrow, which, in its first paroxysm, turns the very thought of religion into agony, and produces a melancholy incapacity for its services and its enjoyments. But though few could assign this reason for not singing the "Lord's song in a strange land," all can appreciate the privilege of having no occasion to appeal to it; of being able, and permitted to find, in a foreign country, all the privileges and consolations of religion; of

having opportunity, when far from the scenes of our youth, and the home and the sanctuary of our fathers, to worship God, not only without molestation, but in the mode that has most commended itself to our consciences, and which is most accordant with our habits; in the mode which harmonizes with our earliest, our fondest, our best associations.

The associations which we form in connection with religion and with all that concerns it,—with the places in which we have worshipped, with the forms we have used, with the hours we have been in the habit of consecrating as sacred, with the character of the worship which we have been accustomed to use,—are, like all our other associations, abundantly strong, and become (as the religion of our choice is more or less a reasonable one) useful incentives to devotion, or obstacles to the entrance of more scriptural opinions. Even where the piety of two individuals is equally enlightened, or two forms of worship equally rational, or nearly so, these associations effectually prevent an

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easy or sudden adoption of forms or modes, or style of discipline to which the mind has not been accustomed. The habits of a life are not easily broken, when once formed; and this consideration should only induce us to watch with greater vigilance and circumspection over their formation, that what *must* exert so powerful an influence over us, may harmonize with our best feelings, and aid the impressions of a sincere piety.

If these associations be uniformly strong, even when some familiarity with the religious forms in which we do *not* join, has worn off their extreme strangeness, how strong must be the desire when in a "strange land," and when surrounded by all that is strange, for those forms of worship, the remembrance of which is interwoven, perhaps, with the history of our whole lives! How fond the remembrance of those familiar and cherished forms with which, perhaps, the happiest hours of our childhood and youth, the most exalted and delightful pleasures of piety and devotion, are associated. We are now supposing that no obstacles more formidable than matters of mere form obstruct the current of our sympathies.

No one is likely to feel all this more strongly than the "Independent" resident on the Continent of Europe. In general, indeed, there are much more serious objections, than any connected with mere forms and modes, to prevent his communion with the churches of the Continent, as well as that of *any* man of sound evangelical sentiment. The gigantic, overshadowing corruptions of the Romish and Greek Churches, the wide-spreading and multiform heresies of Neologism and Rationalism which have pol-

luted with so deep a taint so large a portion of the Reformed Church, present in almost every quarter a spectacle infinitely more melancholy, barriers to communion infinitely more insurmountable, than any which a mere difference, (however extensive,) of forms, and modes, and government, and discipline would oppose. Yet even as it regards these last, and upon the supposition that the more formidable objections were removed, the Independent is more likely than any other man to be revolted by the peculiarities of the continental systems of worship. The opinions he holds have, as yet, made comparatively little progress. It is only in those countries, (England and America for instance,) in which the principles of the Reformation have been more fully and fairly carried out than in any other, that those peculiar views, touching the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, which are characteristic of Independency, are adopted by any considerable number. For the most part, both in the reformed and the unreformed Churches, the right of the civil magistrate to interpose and exert his authority in ecclesiastical affairs, is not only allowed, but maintained, while even in the Reformed Churches too many of the vestiges of popery still linger; soon, we trust, to be swept away by the mighty and purifying energies of some second Luther.

Independency is comparatively little known on the Continent; so little, indeed, as to deserve the name of an exotic there, embraced, as it is, principally by English residents, and not yet naturalized to the soil. We long to see it more extensively adopted, and rejoice even in its first appearance in any of the towns of Germany and Holland,

associated as many of those places are, not only with the history of the Reformation, but with the history of many of our noble-minded ancestors, who sought in them a refuge from the intolerable oppressions of their own country. It was from Leyden that the first body of English Independents, forming part of the church of the devoted Robinson, sailed for that western world, which was not only to afford them an asylum from persecution, but where their principles were destined to strike deep root, to spread widely, and propagate themselves over the population of a mighty empire.

These general observations have been suggested by the engraving of the English Reformed Church at Hamburg, which embellishes our present number. We now proceed to make a few remarks on the rise, progress, and present state of this Independent interest in that important city.

The free Imperial City of Hamburg is situated in Lower Saxony; it is the third city in Germany. It is little inferior in size or population to Vienna or Berlin. Seated on the rivers Elbe and Alster, (the latter a tributary of the former) its commercial advantages are of the highest order. Whilst foreign vessels of all nations visit its ports, the Elbe permits it to push domestic trade up many of the navigable rivers of Germany. Like most other places of note on the Continent, it suffered most severely during the late awful war, especially in the siege of 1813, when the French succeeded in forcing the Russians to evacuate it, after a very obstinate struggle. In May, 1814, it was delivered up to the Allies, since which time it has recovered its former wealth and importance.

The government of the city is in

the hands of the Senate, subject to the supreme authority of the Germanic Confederation (of which it is a member) in those points which come within the scope of that anomalous council.

The established religion is Lutheran; all denominations, however, are professedly tolerated. Indeed, as far as we have heard, any thing is tolerated rather than a really active and zealous piety. You may profess what you please, provided you let it be seen by your conduct, that it matters not whether you believe it or not. But you must not take any active step to make proselytes. The senate is jealous; the press is not free; in short, even the distribution of tracts has been known to be a somewhat hazardous experiment.

The population is considerably more than one hundred thousand, of whom probably six or eight thousand are British.

The morals of the people are confessedly corrupt, and the English residents are greatly exposed to the contagion of Continental vices.

For many years the only religious service in the English language was performed with unimpressive formality by an English clergyman; but on the invasion of the French, public worship, in the English language, was interrupted, and was not restored in any form for a considerable period after the evacuation of Hamburg by the French troops.

About the latter end of the year 1815, some pious individuals in Edinburgh sent out, at their own expense, a minister, (Mr. Dick,) who laboured there for eighteen months, in a private house, with considerable success. In May, 1817, that gentleman returned home, and an application was then made on behalf of the Eng-

lish Congregation at Hamburg, to the Committee of Hoxton Academy, London, to send over a young minister. In compliance with this request, the Rev. G. D. MUDIE was selected to supply them for three months, and upon the expiration of that period, was invited to become the pastor of that people, twenty-eight British residents engaging to provide for his necessary support. A crowded and highly respectable audience, both German and British, having heard Mr. M., he felt it to be his duty to comply with this request, and he was, therefore, solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry, October, 1817, at Mr. George Clayton's Chapel, Walworth, and then returned to Hamburg to enter upon his pastoral duties.

In the year 1818, a concession, which answers to a deed of trust and incorporation, had been granted by the Senate, with certain immunities, and the congregation was thus officially recognized under the denomination of the *English Reformed Church*.

The private house was soon found to be far too small to accommodate the rapidly increasing congregation, and a petition was presented to the Senate for its protection and assistance, in obtaining a more commodious place of worship.

This application was unexpectedly opposed by Mr. Mellish, the English Consul, who took upon himself to represent the petitioners as a fanatical sect, who were the sources of much mischief in their own country! Upon this, several gentlemen of the congregation, eminent English merchants in Hamburg, addressed a memorial to Lord Castlereagh, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who immediately instructed the Consul to withdraw his opposition—an op-

position the less excusable, as, at this time, there was not another English minister of any denomination in the city.

In the interval occasioned by the meddling of this intolerant functionary, the congregation obtained the temporary use of the French Reformed Chapel, which was capable of accommodating about 200 hearers. This was not sufficient, however, for their rapidly increasing numbers, and was the more inconvenient, as they could only have one service on the Lord's day, and that at an undesirable hour.

Although the church was constituted upon congregational principles in 1821, yet Baptists and Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Methodists, have been found united around the table of the Lord, realizing the delightful idea of brethren dwelling together in unity.

Circumstances which it is not necessary here to relate, induced Mr. Mudie, about the close of 1821, to resign his charge, and to return to England. He was succeeded by the Rev. T. W. MATHEWS, from Rotherham College, who was ordained at Hamburg, August, 1822, by the Rev. Messrs. Alliot and Gilbert, of Nottingham, who visited the Continent for that purpose. The interest gradually increasing, it was resolved again to attempt the erection of a new chapel, and a petition was presented to the Senate, to give the English a plot of ground for the purpose, it being extremely difficult to purchase a site within the fortifications of this ancient city. The Senate liberally complied with the request of the petitioners, and granted a very eligible spot on the ancient rampart, contiguous to the harbour, on one condition, that they would erect a

building which would be ornamental to the city.

This request was gladly complied with, although it involved a larger expenditure than had at first been contemplated.

The accompanying view of the *English Reformed Church* is engraved from one taken by Professor Suhr on the spot. It is seen as a commanding edifice in the immediate locality of the harbour, and certainly does honour to the denomination by whom it was erected.

The Chapel will accommodate about 500 persons; and behind it, under the same roof, is the pastoral house.

The gallery is appropriated to the use of seamen, many of whom attend.

On Lord's-day, July 16, 1826, this interesting edifice was opened for divine service. The morning service was attended by a deputation from the Senate—other public officers of state—some of the Lutheran clergymen of the city, and a considerable attendance of British residents and seamen, as well as natives of other countries. Dr. Raffles delivered a dedicatory address, preached, and again officiated in the evening. Mr. Matthews, the pastor, preached in the afternoon. A collection was made, towards which the deputation from the Senate presented a purse of 300 marks. The collection amounted to £85. Subscriptions to a liberal amount were raised towards the building of the chapel in Hamburgh, and Mr. Matthews collected considerable sums in England and Scotland, which he visited for this object. The cause of God appeared to gather strength under his pastoral care, and a Sunday School and Tract Society were formed. The latter, through the

liberality of the parent Society, promises to be a blessing, not only to Hamburgh, but to Germany generally.

These pleasing prospects were obscured, in the Autumn of 1829, by Mr. Matthews avowing opinions in harmony with some of the notions of the modern millenarian school, viz. universal pardon, and absolute perfection. The church having in vain opposed his opinions for six months, applied by letter to the Congregational Board of London, for their judgment upon the novel sentiments he had avowed. The following is the minute of the Board, in May, 1830, upon the subject.

"A letter addressed to the Board by the Deacons and Trustees of the English Congregational Church in the free Imperial City of Hamburgh, and a paper from T. W. Matthews, entitled 'The principal Articles of my belief,' having been read, together with other documents connected with the application :

"It was resolved—That the Board is impressed with much concern and grief in hearing of the interruptions of harmony which have taken place within the last twelve months, in the said Congregational Church, and that on a full notice of the subject, as submitted to their attention, the members of the Board are of opinion that the evils which they lament have arisen from a change of religious sentiments in the pastor; that the sentiments which he now holds are contrary to those which he avowed at his ordination; that they are contrary to the faith of the reformed churches, and that they are unquestionably contrary to the general opinion of the churches and pastors of the Congregational Denomination throughout Great Britain."

Although this opinion was confirmed by eight Theological Professors, and some of the most pious and gifted ministers in Great Britain, yet Mr. Matthews would not yield, but compelled the people to take legal measures to remove him from the pulpit, which involved a long, anxious, and expensive dispute, which was submitted to a Deputation of the Senate for adjudication; but before their sentence was given, Mr. Matthews resigned, and in October, 1830, Dr. Boothroyd, of Huddersfield, appealed to the ministers, through the pages of the Evangelical Magazine, for assistance—"Is there no person of age, and whose other qualifications are respectable, who will be ready to go over and help this now destitute church?" Happily

an individual was found; the Rev. J. RHEDER, of Yorkshire, accepted the and is now the pastor, and has partially succeeded in building up those ruins which these unhappy disputes have occasioned. The law proceedings have considerably increased the amount of the outstanding debt, and we fear that another appeal to English liberality will be necessary to relieve this infant cause from the effects of this unexpected calamity.

Amongst other privileges enjoyed from the Senate by this church is the right of marriage, which, singularly enough, is not possessed at present by the resident clergyman of the Episcopal Church, and a large share of public attention has been drawn to the question by the disputes this position of things as occasioned.

MISSIONARY ENCOURAGEMENTS.

It is now a very general opinion that a day of hitherto unequalled glory is about to burst on the Christian church—that the tardy progress of the Gospel, which has been for so many ages the triumph of the infidel and the lamentation of the Christian will be witnessed no more; and that this deep reproach is about to be rolled away for ever.

One of the most cheering characteristics of the present aspect of the times is, that the stupendous difficulty and magnitude of the undertaking in which missionaries are embarked, have no tendency to chill the zeal or appal the imagination of the church. Christians are only anxious to know more accurately what is to be done. Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet, in the curious account of their circumnavigation, have, it is true, given

many encouragements in the recital of partial successes; but the long journey they have pursued through lands of darkness and idolatry principally tend to show the necessity of renewed and more extensive exertions. And what is the effect produced by such a concise view of a world's wants—of the moral statistics of our globe? We know what it would have been fifty years ago—if, indeed, we could have imagined such an enterprise as theirs projected then; its effect would have been to repress exertion—to damp zeal—to demonstrate, in the opinion of many, the hopelessness of missionary efforts. Nay; was it not the custom only thirty or forty years ago, even amongst those who professed Christianity, and who professed to be anxious for its triumphs; was it not the custom

to point to the boundless tracts of heathenism—the ancient, and, as they said, impregnable structures of idolatry and superstition—the hopeless degradation, as they would term it, of the savage and barbarian—as an unanswerable argument against what was deemed the fanaticism of missionary exertion? Was not this thought a sufficient excuse for the utmost degree of indolence and apathy? But what is the effect of such disclosures now? It is not to repress but to increase exertion, not to induce again that indolence which was the disgrace of former ages, but to call forth yet more of that missionary zeal which seems to rise with the difficulties it encounters, and to be stimulated by opposition into yet more vigorous energy. All this sufficiently shows that all Christendom feels itself embarked in a serious enterprise, and we may soon anticipate the most glorious results.

But, again, what encouragement may we not derive from the visible manner in which the Divine Being is subordinating art and science, and increased knowledge, and the power which civilization imparts, to the progress of Christianity! It is only two or three centuries ago that the voyages missionaries now undertake would have been absolutely impracticable; it is only a very few years ago that they would have been pronounced chimerical; but if we go a little farther back they would have been really impossible. Such schemes must have tarried for many an improvement in human knowledge. Let us consider for a moment. Centuries ago, and the very vessels which have enabled these singular voyagers to accomplish their long and perilous voyage would have been wanting. It has been matter of surprise to every one who has

studied the history of the discovery of America, that Columbus should have ventured on his voyage in a bark so frail; and, what is more, that he should have surmounted the perils of the Atlantic. Only a few centuries ago, and the compass—that wondrous instrument that has done more than all other things beside to bind together the scattered fragments of the human family, and to facilitate the intercourse of nation with nation—that instrument, without which the timid navigator would still have been seen creeping along the shore, instead of boldly launching into the deep, while vast portions of the earth would have been still unvisited—a few centuries ago, this instrument was unknown, and I need not say how hopeless to attempt the circumnavigation of the globe without it. In the same interval, have those splendid astronomical discoveries been made, which have tended to make man so familiar with the deep. Only a few centuries ago, and two-thirds of the earth were unexplored, and more than one-third absolutely undiscovered; only a few centuries ago, the man who first performed the circumnavigation of the globe was looked upon as a sort of prodigy; and considerably less than two centuries ago, a great many of those places now visited by missionaries, would, from their barbarism, and want of European intercourse, have been utterly inaccessible. Thus has the progress of the arts and sciences, the advancement of knowledge, the inquisitive researches of the traveller, and the more selfish enterprises of commerce, been rendered most obviously subservient to the cause of Christ, and become pioneers, as it were, in the triumphant way of the Gospel. Let

me not, however, be for a moment supposed to favour the opinion of those men who absurdly think that the missionary is not to begin to instruct the heathen in the truths of religion until he has civilized him. Far from it; I believe that wherever the missionary can but come into contact with the heathen, there he should immediately begin his more important duties. And, indeed, it has already been abundantly proved, by experience, that let but Christianity be received, and all the inferior blessings of knowledge and civilization follow in its train. This it is which most effectually subdues the passions, and reclaims from that wildness and that ferocity which characterize the savage life, and which form the chief bar to improvement. But I am now speaking, not of the missionaries' duty, when he once comes into contact with the heathen, but of the manner in which civilization and knowledge have been employed by the divine providence, to facilitate the intercourse of the Christian world with the heathen; to give the former, as it were, dominion over the latter, and to disseminate more widely and more easily, every species of religious knowledge. Yes, it is delightful to think—that while Christendom was slumbering through so many ages, forgetful of the vast duty that devolved upon it, forgetful of our Lord's last command, Go and teach all nations; then the Divine Providence, so inexhaustible in all expedients tarried, not for the indolence of man; it was employing the unconscious energies of the philosopher, the mechanic, the traveller, the merchant, who all severally, but all ignorantly contributed to the final triumphs of the Gospel, and helped to accumulate those trea-

asures of knowledge and power, which are now so abundantly employed in the Christian cause. And when the Christian church awoke up at length from its long slumbers, it found every thing ready before-hand—every facility afforded—all requisite knowledge obtained—every thing anticipated by the forecast of providence. Even the infidel himself cannot help sometimes turning to these singular signs of the times; even he starts up from his dream of scepticism, and gazes with wonder on the stubborn facts which he cannot deny, and dares not think unmeaning. Amongst those facts, some of the principal are, that, on Christian nations alone, are conferred, for the most part, all the elements of power and knowledge; that these alone are so over-populous as to send forth their teeming colonies, spreading their languages, manners, customs, and knowledge, wherever they go; that these nations have already attained so high a pre-eminence, and exert such an extensive and ever-widening influence, that they will impress a new character on the earth; that from these nations alone are the various seeds of knowledge and religion wafted to all other lands by every wind of heaven; that while other systems of religion, rather superstition, are either utterly stationary, or hastening rapidly to decay, Christianity assumes a character of greater vigour and energy, and is sending out her embassies of mercy and peace; that while the mysteries of other religions remain locked up in the language of their votaries, or are the subject of curiosity only to the learned—the BIBLE has shaken out its treasures on all nations, and recorded its solemn truths in every tongue and dialect of man.

and only the words of scripture

FOUR ANSWERS TO AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

"And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"—LUKE x. 25.

I. FIRST, then, there is the answer which our Lord elicits from the querist who put to him this question;—"He said unto him,—what is written in the law—how readest thou?" "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself;"—and Jesus answering said unto him, "*Thou hast answered right.*" "*This do, and thou shalt live!*"—Yes, it must be confessed this answer is perfectly unexceptionable and reasonable enough—*could the conditions it involves be complied with.* This is the only, but alas! a sufficient objection to it. What it demands is what no fallen creature can ever render—a *perfect obedience to the law of God.* It is only necessary to glance for a moment at the spirituality of that law, the severity, extent, and variety of its requirements, to convince us that *perfect compliance* with it, is altogether hopeless, and to make us shudder at the thought of expecting eternal life as the rightful purchase of obedience. That law is summarily contained in the two precepts which our Lord made the lawyer repeat to him; "on them," as our Saviour asserted upon another occasion, "on them are suspended all the law and the prophets." The other commands of the law of God are only modifications or extensions of these two cardinal laws.—"To love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, mind!" These expressions, I doubt not, are *nearly synonymous*; but the reiteration is intended to show how in-

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tense—how absorbing—this love to God is to be; it is to occupy our whole souls; it is to employ all our faculties; to animate all our affections. This implies an exact fulfilment of *all* the relations in which we stand to him. As our Creator—he is to meet with habitual reverence and implicit submission;—as our constant benefactor—he must find the liveliest gratitude;—as "*our heavenly Father*"—he is to receive the most entire love—the most willing obedience; as our Lord and sovereign, all his law—whatever that law may be, *must be authoritative*,—fulfilled to the letter without hesitation or demur. Then again, as to the motives upon which these demands are to be complied with—the great motive must be *love*; the *will* must go with all we do. Again, as to the extent of these requirements—they exact strict obedience in every action, word, and thought. Such is the spirituality of God's law, that unless it rules in the mind, it considers it has done nothing. It rests not content with the parade of outward forms, nor even with the better homage of outward obedience. If a man have not only complied with all the forms of religion with the most accomplished hypocrisy, but has actually abstained from every thing like gross immorality—nay, is in the eyes of his deluded fellows, a very miracle of sanctity, it will all go for nothing with God, unless his thoughts have most exactly accompanied his actions, and unless he has not only *done* no ill—but not even *thought* it. Such is the strict and searching manner in which Christ himself tells us his law is to try the heart.

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A lustful thought is, in the eye of God, adultery; covetousness, theft; malice, murder. Then again, this perfect obedience, enforced by such purity of motives, and so extensive in its requirements—is to be *habitual*. It is not to be summed up in an occasional act of charity, or on extraordinary alms—or in the periodical sanctimoniousness of the Sabbath—it is to be an *habitual obedience*. From the first moment you enter upon existence in this life, to the dying hour, there is to be no thought, word, or action, inconsistent with the holy law of God. Lastly, the law, in reference, to your neighbour, is to be obeyed with the same precision, and from the same motives, and is to be interpreted with the same strictness; and you must never have indulged in a moment's malice, anger, envy, unkindness, covetousness, towards any one of your fellow-creatures; and remember, "*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.*" When you can defy this threat in the consciousness of perfect innocence—when you can say you fear not the application of a law so strict to any one action, to any one word, to any one *thought*, at any period of your life, in reference to any individual, or to God himself;—when you can say, that you have yielded this obedience from the motives which have been enjoined, and which are indeed the only motives sufficient to ensure it; when you can say, I have through life loved God with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, with all my mind, *and my neighbour as myself*,—fear not death—fear not judgment—go with confidence to the tribunal of God, and claim as your just *right*, the gift of eternal life; *it will not be denied you*:—fear not lest the Saviour's

words should prove untrue—" *This do and thou shalt live*;" heaven shall be yours, not by gift but by title; you will have fairly *earned* it. But if this obedience should have been defective only in one instance—should there have been but one *crime* to weigh against a multitude of virtues, that would condemn you by the law of God; for it is a *perfect obedience* that he claims; one act of sin would argue a *state of mind* opposed to the will of God,—a fallen heart, which in itself implies the highest disobedience, and would be a persuasive proof, that your acts of obedience were a forced, a slavish, and unwilling homage—exactd, not voluntary—a tax, not a gift. Such is the strictness of the law of God. "*He who offends in one point is guilty of all.*"—Oh! who of us, fallen, depraved, corrupt creatures,—who have sinned so grievously and constantly against God and against one another—who have not violated one precept but all, and that too habitually—who have forgotten, hated, despised our Creator, Benefactor, and Father—indulged every unholy passion against one another—been so far from loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves,—who of us will venture to claim "*eternal life*," upon the ground of our obedience to the law of the Supreme, "*as the rightful reward of our doings?*" Alas! it is indeed a hopeless case, and if this were the only way "*to life and immortality*," we must utterly despair of ever attaining it.

II. But there is a second answer which has been devised to this question—it is that which he who is commonly called the "*legalist*," gives. He has hit upon an ingenious expedient for compromising matters between himself and God, and hopes to go to heaven, half in dependence upon the divine

mercy, and half in dependence upon his own good works. He acknowledges, indeed, that as to *perfect obedience* to the law of God, it is quite out of the question—that human nature is certainly the subject of many frailties and infirmities—that in many things we undoubtedly offend. He is willing to confess that the Scriptures are tolerably near the truth when they affirm—that “*in the sight of God shall no flesh living be justified.*” But still such men maintain that the divine mercy is unbounded—that it will not too minutely scrutinize little faults, nor lay too much stress on what must be considered, after all, merely human frailties—that if we are just to all—benevolent as far as we can be—kind and hospitable to our friends and our neighbours—if we pay our debts—live in peace—honour our king—love our country—and above all, are found in the exercise of “*that charity,*” which, according to their perverted view of it, “*covereth a multitude of sins,*”—they trust that God will graciously accept of their modified obedience—that his mercy will not too strictly and scrupulously insist upon minor failings, which, in fact, they think for the most part atoned for by the magnificence of their “*good deeds;*”—that if, after all, there should be some little demands upon them, they trust that the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ will serve to make up for all deficiencies;—thus they think they shall enter heaven with no little self-complacency at the “*good deeds*” which have done so much to gain them admission, and with a tolerable degree of perfection for its occupations and enjoyments.

Such errors, I apprehend, result from an utter ignorance of the *spirituality and strictness of the law of God*, and of true holiness. I am sure I would be the last to say that the

good works and private and public virtues, upon which such men lay so much stress, are not to be cultivated. Far be it from me to say, that any man can go to heaven in the wilful neglect of them, or that such good deeds and virtues, accompanied by a proper spirit, are not rewardable; for God has in mercy assured us they shall be rewarded, although the rewards are infinitely disproportioned to the value of the “*works;*” but what I utterly deny is, that these vaunted “*good works,*” and every-day virtues have any efficacy whatever towards atoning for our past transgressions, or constructing for us any real title to the inheritance of heaven. In the first place you will observe, that the “*legalist,*” in enumerating the virtues which merit eternal life, limits his view almost *entirely, generally entirely,* to the *second great commandment*, which enjoins “*love to our neighbour,*” and refers to the social duties of life; yet it is upon the *first* great command that the whole controversy between God and man principally hinges: it is true that we are abundantly guilty as to the second; how, indeed, should it be otherwise, since enmity to God, and departure from him, must necessarily be attended with a general derangement of the whole moral system, and the utter loss of the highest motives which can actuate our nature, either in reference to God or man? Still, in all our *social relations*, our fall has operated less awfully than in reference to that *grand relation* in which we stand to the Supreme Being. Suppose we pay our debts, and respect our neighbours; suppose we perform all those little offices of kindness and friendship, which are perfectly compatible, with an utter disregard of any thing like religion; suppose we sustain all those

relations of life with tolerable decency, which it is a shame for any man not to sustain well, which are often sustained by far different motives than those of love to God, or a religious principle; nay, which many men do actually fulfil aright, without any regard to either: I say still, what are all these mere household moralities—these mere decencies of life, which are actually the very lowest requirements of religion and stand at the very basis of Christianity—what are all these to the purity, spirituality, and extent of the divine law? What are all these good deeds to your fellow men to those obligations you were under to obey the will of God? A kind father—a good husband—a dutiful son—a firm friend—a worthy neighbour—a peaceful citizen—an obedient subject,—is it with such pleas as these that you will answer for your uniform neglect—forgetfulness—hatred of God? Is it upon these things you would rest when God demands why you have not *loved* the Lord thy God with all “your heart, soul, strength, and mind?” Why, even if a man had actually fulfilled, without one breach, all the relations of life, and had obeyed to the letter the second great command, it would still leave the *first* untouched, and the great controversy between God and him unsettled. The highest relation man has to sustain is, as yet, forgotten; the most binding duties he has to perform would be still neglected, whatever the good deeds he has done—whatever he may have conferred on his fellow-men. That language of our Lord to the Pharisees would still be applicable to such—“These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.” How much more strongly does the argument, then, apply to us, who must acknowledge not only that we

have utterly neglected the *first* great command, but have most lamentably forgotten and disobeyed the second; and not only have not loved God *better than ourselves*, but have not loved our neighbour *as ourselves*.

III. But there is a *third* answer, which has been devised to this question. It is that which the *Antinomian* gives. He tells us that if the soul has the happy assurance within, that it is one of the *elect* of God; it is safe—eternally safe, according to God's determinate decree; that it is interested in the salvation which God definitively appointed should be granted to *some*, let their characters be what they may; that the law is no longer binding, because it has received full obedience in the person of another; that personal holiness is of no consequence, because Christ has wrought out a holiness pure, spotless, and that cannot fail us; that however flagrant our conduct, however vile our characters, however insolent our transgression of the divine law, all this cannot finally obstruct our admission to heaven; nay, some have even said—that it is our duty to sin, “*that grace may abound*,” “and whose damnation is just.” Such nonsense is, no doubt, a very convenient way of answering this *all-important* question; because, let a man only possess (and by the bye he may soon manage to obtain,) this internal assurance—this infallible evidence of his own mind, that he is amongst the chosen of God—amongst those destined for eternal happiness before the foundation of the world, and he may fearlessly give himself unbounded licence to indulge every abomination and every crime; he possesses a charter for the unrestrained commission of all that is iniquitous; and as long as he can drag with

opiates a sluggish or slumbering conscience, and succeed in persuading himself, that in the midst of all his abominations, he has within the quiet assurance that "*all is well,*" and that he feels shining in upon his soul the quiet light of the divine countenance, while he lives in the habitual violation of the divine law, he possesses an infallible method of uniting the world and religion, of serving God and mammon—of pursuing every sinful pleasure, with the hope of eternal felicity—of enjoying sensuality in this life and heaven in the life that is to come. All this is, doubtless, very convenient to a conscience that must be quieted, conjoined with passions that must be gratified. Nevertheless, we fear that this exposition of the nature of religion, and the foundation of its hopes, will not be found quite a sufficient answer to the question—"Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

In the first place, the Antinomian's *presumption* goes upon the supposition—a supposition flatly and clearly denied by scripture—that the decrees of God, in reference to the salvation of his soul, are irrespective of any determinations that the subjects of divine grace shall undergo a transformation of nature, and a change of heart. The fact is, that it is not more a decree of his that those whom he chooses shall be saved, than it is that those he chooses shall be renewed to holiness of life. These are only parts of the same divine purpose; and all we can say, when we see an Antinomian boasting, in the midst of his wickedness, of the eternal safety of the elect; all that we can say is, not that we *disbelieve* this truth, but that *he*, as long as he remains in sin, gives *infallible* proof that he has no evidence whatever that he

is among the number. The apostle tells us, that the people of God are his "*workmanship created unto GOOD WORKS, which God hath BEFORE ORDAINED that we should walk in them.*"

In the next place, the assurance upon which the Antinomian rests as the sole evidence of his individual interest in the divine decrees, unfortunately does not happen to be that *test* which scripture gives us. It is true, indeed, that the real Christian sometimes enjoys a holy calmness and serenity—a delightful consciousness of the divine favour: but this is only the accompaniment of conscious progress in holiness, and sincere and ardent desires after higher attainments in it. The only sure evidence which scripture gives us, that a man has ever passed from under the influence of sin, and stands interested in the high purposes of heaven, is this—that he is found gradually undergoing a transforming process to the image of God; that he is found inspired with a love of holiness and a hatred of sin; that he is seen fulfilling, with unfeigned humility and sincerity of motive, all the duties of life, and praying for divine assistance to perform them better; that he is seeking nobler attainments in holiness, higher elevation of character, a greater meetness for heaven. "By these fruits," says the Saviour, "ye shall know them; a corrupt tree *cannot* bring forth good fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth evil fruit." "The fruit of the spirit," says the apostle, in the epistle to the Galatians, "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:" the same sentiment he reiterates in the epistle to the Ephesians; and, indeed, on what page of scripture is this *truth not inscribed*? What but the monstrous

absurdities and impiety of Antinomianism could ever have disunited the favour of God and progress in holiness, or have imagined it possible that the God of purity would ever act in a manner so alien to his nature, as to afford the calm assurance of his love and favour to a heart revelling in all the abominations of *sensuality and wickedness*.

But, again, the Antinomian's error runs directly counter to the avowed *design* of the Gospel. It is its professed object to remedy the evils of sin, to repair the ruin of our fall, in all who are led to receive it; the Antinomian's principles would go to give licence to the one, and to perpetuate the other. The atonement itself was given not for the encouragement of sin, but avowedly in order that it might give to those who received its benefits the character of holiness, and set them, in the eye of God, in the situation of beings who had never sinned. Why was such a sacrifice made but to attest the divine regard for holiness? The whole dispensation of the Gospel proves incontrovertibly that it is a system of restoration—of renewal: *it is a new creation*—it is a *resurrection to life*; it is health after disease; it is sight to the blind; it is hearing to the deaf; it is purity to the polluted; it is cleansing to the defiled; it is restoration to the image of God; it is preparation for heaven; but the thorough Antinomian leaves every thing as it was, only granting to a few chosen individuals the full liberty of sinning without the possibility of punishment!

IV. But there is a fourth answer to this question, to which I shall briefly point your attention; that is the answer which the Gospel gives. The Gospel assures us, that by nature our hearts are

depraved, corrupt and fallen; our passions enslaved to sin; it assures us that we have most awfully transgressed the law of God; it assures us that we are, therefore, obnoxious to his just wrath; it assures us, that any method of atonement for our past transgressions must be impossible on our parts; it assures us that any attempt to obey the divine law for the future, in our own strength, must be hopeless and unsuccessful; it assures us that any plea for favour, set up upon our own merits, must prove only our utter ignorance of the purity and spirituality of the divine law; it assures us, in a word, that as far as we are concerned, "WE ARE LOST;" it assures us, nevertheless, that in this Gospel, which proclaims our true condition, there are ample remedies provided for every malady it deplores; it assures us that there has been an atonement offered, so costly, so valuable, that it has fully met the heaviest claims of divine justice, and restored the broken honours of the law; that the most oppressive guilt that ever weighed upon the conscience, may, through this atonement, be at once thrown off, and the darkest soul admitted to behold the light and smiles of the divine favour. It assures us, that whatever the magnitude of our past crimes, they are not too vast for removal; that however deep stained our past guilt, it is not so deep as that it cannot be cleansed away. It is to this grand remedy that we are urged to apply as the only refuge set before us in the Gospel, with a simple belief upon *its efficacy*, with an utter renunciation *of ourselves*; our hopes are all to centre here; it is in Christ, and him alone, that we must look for forgiveness of sin—for acquittal and pardon—for justification with God—for escape

from punishment—for the hope of heaven. Immediately, however, that the soul really and truly receives the benefits of this atonement, a renewing process commences in the soul by the Spirit of God; the soul awakes up to a new life, it becomes the recipient of new principles, motives, desires, and while the efficacy of the one atonement invests man with a holiness not his own, the celestial influences of divine grace begin to operate within towards the production of real and personal holiness—enlightening the mind and purifying the heart, and slowly and silently, and with that calmness which distinguishes all the divine operations, calling forth from the dark and troubled chaos of corruption and sin, all the beauty and harmony, and loveliness, of a divine creation. The Christian, beneath the influence of new principles and feelings, is conscious that his vocation is a holy vocation—that he is “*called to walk in newness of life*,” he pants and struggles therefore for higher attainments in holiness—for greater conformity to the image of God—for more unequivocal proofs of preparation for that heaven, where alone he feels the designs of the Gospel will be completed, and he shall be *holy* and happy for ever. He is found, therefore, daily in the more earnest discharge of duty—in a more vigorous fulfilment of all the commands of Christ; although fully

conscious that he is still the subject of numberless failings, and compelled constantly to repair to that atonement where he first found pardon, for a renewal of it—still, however, he struggles on, but why?—not because he thinks the “*good works*” of the Christian have the slightest efficacy; not that he thinks they can ever serve to counterbalance his own enormous deficiencies; but that he feels they are called for as a public testimony of his gratitude to Him who died for him and rose again; as the only test of real interest in Christ—the only satisfactory assurance that can be given that he has ever obtained the benefits of the atonement;—and lastly, he feels that they are called for by the very character and design of that Gospel which he professes to have received; that its very object is restoration—renewal after forgiveness of past sins—the conquest of depraved passions, and preparation for heaven. Such is the answer the Gospel gives to the question. Dependence on good works for justification, and hope of justification without them, display equal ignorance and folly. “*Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*”—“*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*” Only attest the reality of your faith by a corresponding conduct, and not only repent, “*but bring forth fruits meet for repentance.*”

ON PETER'S DENIALS OF CHRIST.

(Concluded from page 91.)

To the Editors.—IN the last Number of the Congregational Magazine an inquiry was commenced, at the suggestion of your

respected correspondent S. N., whether two passages in Luke's gospel, which relate to Peter's denials of Christ, are, as he sup-

poses, peculiar to that evangelist; or whether, as I have concluded, they are parallel with corresponding portions in the gospels of Matthew, and of Mark. The passages more precisely concerned in this inquiry are, it will be recollected, in the first instance, Luke, xxii. 56, 57; Matt. xxvi. 69, 70; and Mark, xiv. 66—68; and, in the second instance, Luke, xxii. 59, 60; Matt. xxvi. 73, 74; and Mark, xiv. 70, 71.

Your correspondent argues for the peculiarity of the two passages in Luke, from that of the circumstances which they describe. I admit the fact to a certain extent, but contend that it is the peculiarity of parts, not of the whole; and, consequently, will not sanction the separation of the two passages from those with which they are naturally associated. These portions of the evangelical narrative, like many others, are complex, consisting of several successive parts, intimately connected, so as to form a distinct whole; and, although these parts may be variously inserted, or omitted, by different evangelists, the seeming diversity thence arising does not impair the general identity of the subject. By various examples, adduced from the four gospels, I have shown that such differences in the details of a narrative do not necessarily imply a difference of occurrence; and I have, also, shown with how much ease, and probability, the passages in question may be united.

For, what can be more natural than to suppose that, on the first occasion, one and the same maid-servant proposed her charge against Peter, as a disciple of Christ, first to the bystanders, and then to the apostle himself; and that, on the second occasion, a similar charge against him, on the

special ground of his being a Galilean, was suggested by one of the bystanders, re-echoed by the rest, and repelled by Peter in one and the same reply. On the other hand, what can be more unlikely than that the two individual accusers should feebly, and superfluously, have repeated to their companions the very same charges, which had just before been more powerfully, or more generally applied to Peter himself.

Thus far, however, the argument is chiefly negative, since, although objections have been removed, and probabilities have been estimated, neither of the two views now at issue has been absolutely proved, or disproved. The following remarks are, therefore, designed to demonstrate that the two passages in Luke, although peculiar to that evangelist as parts, yet, as regards the entire subjects to which they belong, are in concordance with the analogous passages of Matthew, and of Mark. This will be effected by showing that, in each instance, the narratives of the three evangelists relate to one and the same event, namely to the first, and the last of Peter's personal denials of Christ.

For, among the various denials into which the apostle was betrayed, there were but three of a personal nature; or, wherein he denied, not merely that he was a disciple of Christ, but, even, that he knew the man. In the first of the two instances now under consideration, each of the three evangelists is describing one of these *personal denials*. In Luke's account, this is immediately apparent; "A certain maid-servant, having seen him sitting at the fire, after looking steadfastly at him, said, This man, also, was with him: But he *disowned him*, saying: Woman, I know

him not." It may here be remarked that the Greek verb, ἀρνέσθαι, employed, in all these phrases, is equally applicable to the denial of an affirmation, and to the disavowal of a person. With a view to avoid exaggeration, in most of the other texts of this kind, the word has been translated in the former manner; but, in the passage of Luke, here cited, the grammatical construction restrains its meaning to a personal denial. In Mark's statement, the same expression is employed; although, as is not uncommon, the pronoun is omitted, and a secondary, or auxiliary clause is added; "I know [him] not, neither do I understand what thou meanest." And, in Matthew's shorter narrative, the clause is given alone, "I know not what thou meanest." That the latter expression is of similar import, and signifies a total disavowal of the person, as well as of the cause of Christ, is sufficiently evident; since, under the circumstances in which Peter was placed, no one could allege that he did not know what was meant by being a disciple of Jesus, without intending to disclaim all knowledge of him whatever. This interpretation is confirmed by the language which the same evangelists employ, when relating Peter's last denial, where the circumstances are, in this respect, reversed, Matthew, and Mark using the more precise phrase, "I know not the man;"—"I know not this man of whom ye speak;" and Luke, the more indirect expression, "I know not what thou meanest;" an expression used only on these two occasions, and never applied to the general denials of mere discipleship.

That Matthew, and Mark are here describing a personal denial, is further manifest from the peculiar method, indicative of a cor-

responding design, which they adopt in this part of their gospels. It has already been remarked that, while each of the four evangelists records three denials of Christ by Peter, and, while those related by Luke, and by John, are inserted in the order of time, and are, consequently, intermixed with other occurrences, those related by Matthew, and by Mark, are removed from their natural place, and subjoined, in a distinct paragraph, to the remainder of the narrative. In the three earlier gospels, the account of Peter's denials is followed by a reference to the prediction of Christ on the subject; but this is omitted by John, who, as the author of a later, and supplemental gospel; was chiefly concerned to supply the omissions of his predecessors. He, accordingly, describes three denials of a general nature, and peculiar to his own narrative, not from any regard to the number, but because three denials, alone, remained to be described; and he makes no allusion to the prediction of Christ, because it was not fulfilled by these denials, and had already been sufficiently noticed. But, the preceding evangelists were more at liberty, in this respect; and, therefore, when, out of seven denials, they select three, and subjoin to the last of them the corresponding prophecy of Christ, concerning three particular denials which Peter was about to commit, it is, obviously, with the design of showing the fulfilment of that prophecy; which was not only a matter of considerable importance, but, as in many similar cases, appeared, before the event, to be extremely improbable. By Luke who, as will hereafter be shown, was the earliest of the evangelists, this design was not perfectly accomplished; since he

relates only the first, and the last of the personal denials, by which, alone, the prophecy was verified; and interposes between them one of a general nature, or a simple denial of discipleship. As if with a view to correct this inaccuracy, Matthew, who wrote later, and who, on this, and on several other occasions, is closely followed by Mark, not only selects three special denials, and connects them with the prediction, in a separate, and annexed paragraph; but substitutes a new, and personal denial for the general one introduced by Luke.

The style of Matthew's narrative is, moreover, nearly equivalent to a distinct enumeration of the three personal denials, and of the maidservants, to whom the two former were addressed. "Now Peter was sitting without, in the hall. And a *maidservant* came to him, and said, Thou, also, wast with Jesus of Galilee: But he denied [it] before them all, saying, I know not what thou meanest. And, on his going forth to the porch, another [*maidservant*] saw him, and said to those [who were] there, This man, also, was with Jesus of Nazareth: But he, again, denied [it] with an oath, [saying,] I know not the man. A little after, the bystanders came up, and said to Peter, Certainly, thou, also, art [one] of them, for thy [manner of] speaking discovereth thee," &c. The expressions in the original Greek are peculiarly significant; for the corresponding terms, *μία παιδίσκη*, one *maidservant*, and *ἄλλη*, another [*maidservant*,] are almost equivalent to a *first*, and a *second maidservant*; a mode of speaking used on several other occasions, when two objects, exclusively, are concerned; as, in the parable of the servant of two masters; Matt.

vi. 24; Luke, xvi. 13; in that of the creditor of two debtors; Luke, vii. 41, 42; and in that of the Pharisee, and the publican; Luke, xviii. 10. See, also, Luke, xvii. 34—36; xxiii. 39, 40; Acts, xxiii. 6; Gal. iv. 24; Titus, iii. 10; and Rev. xvii. 10.

Matthew's careful substitution of a personal denial for the general one mentioned by Luke, renders it, therefore, highly improbable that he should, in another instance, have reversed the process, and have defeated his own design, by substituting a general denial for a special one. His exact enumeration of the first, and of the second maidservant, to whom two of the denials were addressed, renders it equally improbable that, between these, there should have been a personal denial, addressed to another maidservant, and omitted by this evangelist, although essential to his purpose; while studiously recording a general denial, which was foreign to it. It is yet more improbable, or, rather, it is impossible that, in all these particulars, Matthew should have been strictly imitated by Mark, who wrote at a still later period, had the same object in view, and enjoyed the peculiar advantage of being the disciple, and assistant of Peter himself; of all men the most able, and the most willing, to furnish a correct narrative of a transaction, in which he was so deeply concerned.

From the whole of this unavoidably minute, and, perhaps, tedious discussion, it necessarily results that, in the first of the two instances now under consideration the three evangelists are describing a *personal denial*. Now, as there were but three personal denials in all; and, as two others are elsewhere inserted, only one remained to be related: The evangelists

are, consequently, here describing one, and the same personal denial; and the passage in Luke's gospel is not a peculiarity of that evangelist, but a concordance with the corresponding passages of Matthew, and of Mark, which was to be proved.

In the second instance under consideration, or, in reference to Peter's seventh denial, according to the arrangement here proposed, a mode of reasoning precisely similar shows that the accounts of the three evangelists are parallel, or, in other words, relate to one, and the same occurrence. Hence, as many of the remarks previously made are equally applicable to both cases, the argument may, without disadvantage, be stated with greater conciseness. This proof is furnished by the fact, that all the three evangelists are, on this occasion, manifestly describing Peter's *last denial*. Matthew's expression would not, indeed, be alone sufficient to determine this point, since the term *εὐθὺς*, *speedily*, *immediately*, or, *soon after*, admits of some latitude of interpretation; and, in John's narrative, which omits the seventh denial, the same term is, accordingly, annexed to the sixth, which, probably, happened only a few moments before. But, this inaccuracy is of no importance, since Matthew's account is clearly parallel with that of Mark, whose language is here remarkably precise; "And, immediately, the cock crew *the second time*;" while that of Luke is, if possible, still more decisive; "And, *instantly*, *παρρησια*, while he was yet speaking, the cock crew:" that is, between the two sentences, "Man, I know not what thou meanest;"—and, "I know not this man of whom ye speak;" affording an additional

proof that these expressions are substantially equivalent. Mark, xiv. 72; Luke, xxii. 60. If any further proof were wanting that this was the last of Peter's denials, as, likewise, his third personal denial, it is supplied by the circumstance that all the three evangelists immediately subjoin Peter's remembrance of Christ's prediction on the subject. This was suggested, as Luke alone intimates, by an expressive look from Christ himself, signifying that the prediction was now fulfilled; and was followed by Peter's penitence, and final retreat from the high-priest's palace; the whole of which interesting sequel is omitted by John, who found it already recorded, and who had not the same object in view.

Now, as each of the three evangelists is describing Peter's *last denial*, and there could not, of course, have been more than one last denial, it necessarily follows that they are describing one, and the same denial; although, as is both natural, and usual, with a slight difference of detail, and of phraseology, which by no means destroys the identity of the occurrence. In this instance, therefore, as in the former, the passage of Luke is not a peculiarity of that evangelist, but a concordance with the corresponding passages of Matthew, and of Mark, which was the point to be determined. And, on the other hand, since it has been shown that these two passages of Luke, as well as the three passages of Matthew, and of Mark, relate to personal denials, the supposition that they are peculiarities would imply, in contradiction to the prophecy of Christ, and to the declarations of the evangelists, that the number of Peter's personal denials of Jesus was not three, but five;

and must, consequently, be erroneous.

I trust this argument will appear equally conclusive to your correspondent, S. N. and to your other readers, as it does to myself. In that case, the number, and order of Peter's denials of Christ, which I formerly proposed, may be regarded as confirmed; while, at the same time, it is freely admitted that the incorporation, in the man-

ner here attempted, of the minor circumstances peculiar to Luke's description of the second, and of the seventh denial, which, from a desire to avoid complication, and redundancy, were previously omitted, tends to render this difficult part of the Harmony of the four Gospels more accurate, and more complete.

W. S.

London, February, 1833.

WITH WHOM DID CHARITY SCHOOLS ORIGINATE?

A LOVE of historical truth, and not of party strife, has led me to propose the above question for the consideration of your readers, as an incorporated society has put forth a statement which the integrity of history demands should be corrected. The Committee of the "National School Society for promoting the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church," in their last Report proposed "to offer some facts in illustration of the progress of education throughout the country," &c. and therefore inserted in their Appendix a long paper on the *rise and progress of the schools for religious education of the poor*. In that paper I find the following passages: "But about 1670, by the benevolent exertions of the Rev. THOMAS GEORGE, who had been minister of St. Sepulchre's Church, London, and the subscriptions of other benevolent persons, great efforts were made for educating the poor in Wales: so that schools were maintained in about eighty chief towns and parishes of the Principality, containing about 1100 children; and the Welsh people themselves were induced to provide

instruction for nearly as many more children.

"The first English CHARITY school was opened in Westminster, in 1698, as an antidote to the 'Jesuit's Charity Grammar Schools,' established during the preceding year in the Savoy. Whether this was the same school as the St. Margaret's Blue Coat School, opened on Lady Day, 1698, does not clearly appear. But this and two other schools, in St. Botolph, Aldgate, and Norton Falgate, were established about the same date."

Upon the former paragraph I have only to remark, that while I regard it to be historically true, that the idea of charity schools was first developed in Wales by the liberal and self-denying efforts of Mr. George, it is necessary the public should understand who this gentleman was. The writers in question say, "He had been minister of St. Sepulchre's, London." And why did he not continue so? For twenty-four years he gave full proof of his ministry there. Every morning throughout the year he catechized in that church. Though constantly preaching, he was most laborious in the visita-

tion of the sick, and with extraordinary munificence, relieved the wants of the poor from his own private fortune. Why did he not continue in this large sphere of usefulness? Was he promoted to a larger benefice? or translated to some ecclesiastical dignity? O, no! He was ejected from his living; for although he was one of the most moderate of nonconformists, yet he was cast out because he could not express his full "assent and consent" to all and every thing in the Book of Common Prayer, and in his old age, (then between sixty and seventy,) he travelled in Wales for the purposes already stated; and though he gave away "*The Whole Duty of Man*," and other Church of England works, and frequently partook of the Lord's Supper at her communion table, yet even in the Principality was he persecuted even to excommunication! It would, doubtless, have been offensive to certain church zealots to know that the first instances of charity schools in the Principality were supplied by an excommunicated nonconformist, and therefore it is quietly stated, that "he had been minister of St. Sepulchre's, London!"

On the second paragraph I must remark, that the school in Westminster, established in 1698, was not "the first English charity school," by several years. The first English charity school was founded in Gravel Lane, Southwark, in 1687, by three gentlemen, Messrs. Shallet, Warburton, and Holland, members of the Presbyterian Church, then under the care of the Rev. Nathaniel Vincent, in St. Thomas's, Southwark. The occasion of it was this, that one Poulter, a Jesuit, set up a popish school, and had given public notice, that he would in-

struct the children of the poor, gratis. To escape the danger of a popish school, at a time when the doctrines of the Reformation did not enjoy the favour of the Court, these devoted Protestant Dissenters established the school in question. It started with forty scholars, but these soon increased to one hundred and thirty, who were taught to read, write, and cypher, together with the principles of religion according to the Assembly's Catechism.

The children were admitted there without distinction of parties and denominations. Their parents and friends were not so much as asked whether they were dissenters, and though due care was taken that they should not offend the law of God and man, by sabbath-breaking, but that they should attend in public worship twice every Lord's day, yet they were left to their liberty as to the place and manner of worship their parents chose to attend.*

Thus it is evident, as many documents might be produced to show, that the first charity school in England was founded amidst the dangers of a tyrannical and semi-popish reign, by liberal nonconformists, eleven years before the members of the Church of England made their first attempt to instruct the neglected poor of the metropolis.† This fact, perhaps,

* Mr. H. Reed's Sermon for the benefit of the Charity School, 1739.

† Some other charity schools were formed amongst the Dissenters about that time.

One was connected with the meeting-house in *Jewry Street, Aldgate*, for which Dr. Samuel Chandler preached in 1708. A second was founded in *Shakespeare's Walk, Shadwell*, in 1713, for thirty boys, at a period when the Tory politics of Queen Anne were about to extinguish the privileges of Dissenters, and a third was established in *Bartholomew Close*, in 1717, and called *The Protestant*

was not known by the writers referred to; but the paltry way in which Mr. George's nonconformity is concealed, makes me suspect that this was not recorded, from the operation of the same ungenerous prejudice.

It may be said that this was a solitary and inconsiderable effort, and that although the Dissenters might be first in the field, the Church made such vigorous efforts as completely to eclipse the puny doings of the Nonconformists. The reader has seen the liberal basis on which the first school was placed. The following passage from Dr. Isaac Watts will explain why that was not followed by the establishment of many other charity schools by the same party: "There was one (a school of charity,) set up in Gravel Lane, in Southwark, by the *Protestant Dissenters*, a little before the revolution, and our deliverance by King William of glorious memory.—Many others were formed by persons of the *Established Church*, to which several Dissenters subscribed largely. But at last they found, by sufficient experience, that the children were brought up in too many of these schools in principles of disaffection to the present government, in bigoted zeal for the word CHURCH, and with a violent enmity and malicious spirit of persecution against all whom they were taught to call Presbyterians, though from many of their hands they received their bread and clothing. It was time, then, for the Dissenters to withdraw that charity, which was so abused; and since the favour of our rulers gives us leave to educate children according to our sentiments and the dictates of our consciences, some generous spirits

amongst us have made attempts of this kind, and employ their bounty in the support of a few such schools. And as we hope this charity will be acceptable to God, and useful to mankind, so we are well assured it will be a sensible service to the present government, which has no friends in the world more sincere and more zealous than the Protestant Dissenters."*

Without staying to prove that the high church party of the present day are just what Dr. Watts described them a hundred and five years ago, it is gratifying to be able to state that the charity school system was extended amongst the Dissenters so far, that almost every respectable congregation had a school connected with it until the rise of Sunday and Lancasterian schools introduced an improved and more extended system of popular education, adapted to the growing wants of the community.

Thus it appears, that in this instance, as well as in that of almost every other method of usefulness now in operation, the Dissenters have first provoked the Churchmen to exertion.

There was a time when evening lectures were considered by Church dignitaries as puritanical and unnecessary—when the education of the poor was pronounced to be jacobinical and dangerous—and when Missionary efforts were only to be made in the sober forms of a dead and heartless orthodoxy—when the abodes of the poor were unvisited, and the sons of the wealthy left uneducated, unless they could reach the standard of Oxonian prodigality and idleness; but the Dissenters, by their even-

Dissenters' Charity Schools, which continues to prosper to the present day.

* An essay towards the encouragement of Charity Schools, pp. 12, 13, 8vo. 1728.

ing services on the Lord's-day, have forced similar exercises from the Church—by establishing Sunday and Lancasterian schools, they have forced the National School Society into action—by their missionary efforts they have forced the two Episcopalian societies to more vigorous effort—by their visiting societies they have forced the laity of the Church to similar attempts—by supporting the London University they have forced the Church to establish a Metropolitan College—as, by their charity schools in Wales and Southwark,

they forced the Churchmen of a century and a quarter back, to undertake similar establishments. Do I glory in these facts as connected with a party? No; but as an illustration of an important principle,—that the unfettered efforts of Christians to do good upon the unendowed, voluntary method, are far more likely to secure the object contemplated than those that result from antiquated endowments which public opinion can neither reach nor controul.

Z. Z.

TREATMENT OF ROMAN CATHOLICS.

"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."—

JESUS CHRIST.

"THE very interesting Memoir," of the late excellent "FELIX NEFF, Pastor of the High Alps," by the Rev. W. S. Gilly, must be perused with admiring gratitude and general improvement. It is stated in reference to the above topic, that "he made numberless converts from Romanism, not so much by argument and discussion, as by mildly inculcating the true spirit of the gospel; not by dwelling on topics of strife, and on points of difference, but on points of universal agreement, and by exhibiting our common Christianity in its most persuasive form, until their hearts melted before the One Mediator and Intercessor, and they said, 'Your God shall be our God, and your creed shall be our creed.'" A most instructive passage occurs in one of Neff's letters, in reference to the proper way of dealing with Roman Catholics. While he was confined to his bed at Plombières, he received several visits from one of the curés, and from some young

Roman ecclesiastics. "Had they come for controversy," said this admirable man, "I should not have been able to receive them; but they carefully avoided every thing that could fatigue me, and even listened willingly to the few words I addressed to them. They were surprised to hear a Protestant speak of the conversion of the heart and of spiritual life, in the same terms as some of their most eminent divines." Most of their prejudices, he adds, proceed from their ignorance of all that concerns true Protestantism, and "they are half disarmed, when we speak to them without any argument of that which constitutes the life, the strength, and the peace of the soul."

Would that there were many a Neff in our united empire! Is there not yet wanting among us all a more truly *Christian Catholic Protestantism*? Would not selections from the best Catholic writers on the leading particulars of "our

common Christianity," become popular, and be likely to prove most efficacious?

It has long seemed to the present writer, that a new edition of father Lamy's *Apparatus Biblicus*, (comprising, among other valuables, "A New Method of Reading the Scriptures,") would be most seasonable, and especially for Ireland. Has there been no reprint

of this most comprehensive and judicious work, since the year 1723? But at present I must conclude, not however without the hope of an early insertion, and of being favoured with some further discussion by the Editors of the Congregational Magazine.

A CHRISTIAN.

January 9th, 1833.

REMARKS ON CERTAIN PASSAGES IN THE LAST NUMBER OF THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

To the Editors.—As you have expressed a wish that I should adopt the epistolary rather than the dialogue form in my future communications, I here make an attempt to comply with your request. I promise you, however, that I shall not relinquish those pleasant conferences in which my last originated; and that you are still to consider my communications not more mine than those of my friend.

At the close of the last, I promised to offer some observations in reply to the Churchman from Conviction, whose second paper, under the imposing title, "The System and Practice of Congregational Dissent unfavourable to Religion," has appeared in the "Christian Remembrancer."* Some observations, however, having appeared in the last number of the "Christian Observer," at which, as it appears to me, Dissenters may justly take umbrage, I shall confine myself, in this letter, to a few remarks upon them. To those who consider the vast difference between the "Christian Observer" and the "Christian Remembrancer," no apology will be necessary for postponing the claims of

the latter to those of the former. Mis-statements in the one might possibly do much mischief; but are too common in the other to impose on any but the few whose bigotry and credulity are equal to any proposition, however monstrous. To "uncase," as Milton terms it, the "pleasant sophisms" of the "Churchman from Conviction," would be matter of mere mirth and recreation, but I feel that the general respectability of the *Christian Observer*, as well as the candour and charity which have usually distinguished it, not to mention the influence which it most justly carries in a considerable party of the Church, demand a grave and sober consideration. And I can truly say, that the following observations are penned far more in sorrow than in anger.

The remarks which, in my opinion, are justly offensive to Dissenters, will be found at the close of the February number of the *Christian Observer*, in the paper, entitled, "*View of Public Affairs.*" After adverting to the coming reforms in the Church, (which, to say truth, the *Observer* almost seems to apprehend will be too extensive;) and after stating what ought not to be attempted, namely,

* January number.

the subversion of the Establishment as *such*, the writer indulges in the following sentences:

"They (reforms) ought not to be such as would subvert the Church of England as a national establishment, under the notion that church establishments are unscriptural; which is the special ground of objection now urged by the Dissenters of almost every denomination...."

"And if on all former occasions we so thought and so wrote, much more do we feel the necessity of so writing at the present moment; for we lament to state that, during the last year, the spirit of many, even of the *better portion* of the Dissenting communions, has greatly changed in regard to our venerated Church. We say it more in grief than in anger,—grief on account of our common Christianity,—that, among too many of those Dissenters who adhere in the main to the same code of doctrine as their brethren of the Establishment, there has been evinced of late a spirit of *sectarianism, of bitterness, of political partizanship*—not to say of *contemptuous triumph*—which angurs no spiritual good, either to them or to the friends of the Church; unless, indeed, it lead the latter to greater watchfulness over their own spirit, that they do not imitate so bad an example. Look at the conduct of some Dissenters, of Evangelical name, in regard to the *late elections*: see how strenuously they have exerted themselves to promote the return of members of known *anti-scriptural sentiments*, in opposition to others of *religious character and consistent Christian life*. We might mention many other things; but we forbear. It may be necessary for us to revert to the topic; and if we do so, we shall not shrink from going into it fully and fairly; but we are unwilling to provoke irritation without extreme necessity, more especially as many of the most pious and sound-minded men among the religious Dissenters mourn over these things not less than ourselves. Most heartily can we use, from our inmost soul, the prayer which was appropriately introduced by the rulers of our Church into one of the Fast-Day Services in the beginning of the late war (we do not recollect whether it was a new prayer, or how often it was used); 'Give us all grace, to put away from us all religious dissension, &c. &c.'

"Our Dissenting friends may remind us that there are, or have been churchmen who would not use this prayer; as was the case with the late Dr. Daubeny, and the present rector of Mary-le-bone, who preferred violating their ecclesiasti-

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cal obedience to reading it; because it recognized some persons as holding the essentials of our most holy faith, who do not agree with us in external worship. We know, and lament, that such a spirit has been displayed, and that Dissenters have made it recoll upon our Church, which is the *farthest possible* from being an *intolerant church*. But while the well-disposed members of the Church of England have been increasingly anxious to regard in a Christian spirit 'all who agree in the essentials of our most holy faith, and look for pardon through the merits and mediation of the Saviour;' some of the Dissenting ministers of the present day adopt a style of *exclusionism* which—to say nothing of its violating truth—does no honour to their candour. There happen to lie on our table a number of *The Times* newspaper, which announces that the Bishop of London has been preaching a charity sermon at Hounslow, and a pamphlet entitled 'The Sacred Trust; a Charge delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. T. Atkinson over the Church assembling at Hounslow, by Andrew Reed.' Now, what a miserable, narrow minded exclusionism is this; 'THE church assembling at Hounslow!' Thus the Episcopal church at that place is no church; the Bishop of London and Dr. Benson are mere pretenders; while *Bishop Reed and the Rev. Mr. Atkinson are 'THE church, the true church, the only church in the place.'*

The words printed in italics are not so printed in the original. We have taken this liberty with them just to indicate to what parts of the above quotation we wish more particularly to call the attention of our readers.

We shall, of course, suppose that the "Observer" intended the above remarks to apply to a considerable portion of Dissenters, if not to the *generality* of them. If he meant only one or two, or a few, it would be extremely uncharitable in the "Observer" to imply that they were widely characteristic of the Dissenting body, or, indeed, to make much of the matter in any way.

The "Christian Observer" first charges Dissenters, even "those who agree in the main with the same code of doctrine as their

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brethren of the Establishment," with manifesting a spirit of "sectarianism, of contemptuous triumph," &c. This language is somewhat vague. If by "sectarianism," the writer means that Dissenters have displayed an unabated, uncompromising hatred of the corruptions of the Establishment, and an earnest desire to see them removed, he is perfectly right. If by "sectarianism" he means that they have manifested any indisposition to hold intercourse with members of the Establishment, *so far as the latter will permit them*, I apprehend, that so far from this being the case, it is *churchmen*, rather than Dissenters, who are chargeable with this exclusive spirit, with this particular exhibition of sectarianism: justifying their withdrawal of those patronizing smiles with which they once condescended to favour certain Dissenters, and certain Societies, by saying, that Dissenters have lately written so *severely against the church!* They have quite forgotten what I think my last communication plainly showed, that the bulk of the church, both in its old societies, and in the majority of its publications, have been systematically pursuing a far more violent course, in reference to the Dissenters, for many years past. I have long observed that Churchmen seem to think, from some fancied *legal* superiority with which an establishment invests them, that they have a right to say what they will in the shape either of defence or attack, while any attempt on our part, to use their own weapons, is to be resented as an assumption of privileges, which belong exclusively to an establishment. I have long observed that Churchmen cannot bear to see a fair, honest avowal of the sentiments of a Dissenter; namely, that

not only should all the abuses of the church be removed with an unsparing hand, but that the connection between church and state should cease. A Churchman's prejudices on this point, his associations with his venerated establishment, will not permit him to forgive such profane language, or to remember that if a Dissenter be honest, he cannot but avow all this, and that if he believes it to be an important truth, he is right in straining every nerve to diffuse and establish it.

If, again, by "contemptuous triumph," our contemporary only meant that Dissenters are very glad that certain reforms are about to be effected, and that they do not attempt to disguise it, it would be all true. They *really* think that such reforms furnish matter for congratulation: they do not deem it necessary to put on mourning on so joyful an occasion. They would not, like our contemporary, *seem* to be sorry that that hour is at length come, or fast approaching, which they have long and deliberately wished for, which they have strenuously endeavoured to bring about, and which they believe full of hope and promise, both for the Episcopalians and themselves. They will not do their brethren of the Establishment so much unkindness as to put on a face of melancholy, when they sincerely believe that they ought to indulge in the loudest gratulation. They cannot conceive how the prospect of getting rid of loathsome abuses can justify the language of solemn lamentation. If, indeed, Dissenters were possessed by the malignant spirit which our contemporary seems here ready to attribute to them, they would lament over the prospect of *gradual* reform; they would say to the dignitaries of the Church,

in the language of Milton—"Bate not; quit yourselves like men; stand by all your immunities and revenues;" they would rejoice at any delay, at any obstacle in the progress of reform; they would "triumph" that nothing was done to allay that rising hurricane of national wrath, which already begins to howl so forebodingly around the trembling pinnacles of the Establishment.

But if, by "contemptuous triumph," "political partizanship," &c. &c. our contemporary means that Dissenters have taken advantage of the present situation of the Church, to display a malicious exultation at its anticipated downfall, or to urge with their utmost and united force, their own grievances, or to take part with the extreme faction, that they may render the destruction of the Church both more complete and more certain, we must beg to plead not guilty, and to affirm, on the contrary, that considering the advantageous position Dissenters now occupy, and the grievances of which they have so long complained, they have lately acted with the most commendable forbearance towards the Establishment. Let us mention a particular or two:—How easy would it have been for Dissenting Ministers and journalists to have roused, a short time ago, a general spirit of resistance to the "church rates!" Examples were not wanting; the feeling of abhorrence in which that odious exaction is held is intense and universal; and how successful agitation might be for this purpose, Ireland furnishes a conclusive proof. There the Catholics are about to be released from church cess! We have no doubt that we shall be released too; but Dissenters might, if they

pleased, hasten that long-expected day. We might, if we pleased, mention several other circumstances in illustration of the moderation of the great body of Dissenters; but we content ourselves with citing their conduct on that very occasion in which our contemporary thinks them most open to censure—THE LATE ELECTIONS. I am persuaded (and for confirmation of this assertion, beg to turn to the publications, whether weekly or monthly, which are the avowed organs of the dissenting community,) that no portion of his majesty's subjects rejoiced more heartily in the return of members of moderate opinions—reformers, but not destructives—or in the discomfiture of the extreme radical party (who, if in power, would make very short work with the church,) than did the Dissenters. I myself know instances of dissenting ministers who voted for men whose politics tended to Toryism rather than the contrary, merely to insure the exclusion of a Radical rival. Of the support which the Dissenters were willing to give Lord Henley, we need not speak. As to the cases to which the *Christian Observer* so mysteriously alludes, we can only say, we know but of *one* which could give even a colourable pretence to such a representation. If the *Observer* had his eye (as we suspect) on that case, when he penned the above words, all we can say is, that though nothing on earth should have induced us to vote for the candidate who obtained from the Dissenters, (under the impression that the case was one of melancholy necessity) so many of their suffrages, nothing on earth should have induced us to vote for his anti-reforming rival.—

The "scriptural sentiments" and "evangelical piety" of that man (we speak deliberately,) are quite compatible with a bigotry as paltry as it is malignant, and a spirit of persecution not unworthy of a far other age.

And here I must be indulged in a momentary digression, just to make an observation of a general nature on this subject. It is this: that while I trust that that time will never come, when Dissenters, in choosing their representatives, shall be indifferent touching the personal character of those they support, I trust also that that time will never come when they shall substitute general propriety of character, for those special political qualifications without which it is absurd to elevate them to the legislature. Orthodoxy in point of religious sentiment, is, I grieve to say, no obstruction to a systematic and unblushing defence of all the most gigantic abuses which oppress our country. When we consider what has been the *general* conduct of the bishops in the House of Lords, what their *recorded* votes on most of those great questions connected with our liberties, whether civil or religious, till the same indisputable authority which first demanded their too ready opposition to liberal measures, has enjoined their equally obsequious assent to them; when we consider what has been the general political conduct of those who have been the most strenuous, devout, and bigoted members of the Church of England in the Commons,—that in *them* we recognize the habitual, unflinching champions of every great corruption and abuse, the most violent opponents of the abolition of slavery, and of reform, both political and ecclesiastical, we must surely feel that orthodoxy of religious creed,

and general decency of character are quite reconcileable with a style of politics equally disgraceful and ruinous to the country.

Our contemporary, in the closing note, takes occasion to eulogize the Establishment as being the farthest possible from intolerance. To this statement I really must demur; and can only wonder how Churchmen can make the assertion. I know that it has been the custom of late for the Church to take the merit of voluntarily relinquishing that power, which, in fact, has been by successive efforts, and with immense difficulty, wrested from her, and to pretend that what was, in reality, forced upon her from without, was the genuine, the spontaneous fruit of her own superabundant charity. Dissenters cannot forget that in almost all those measures which have gradually extended, consolidated, and confirmed their liberties, the majority of the clergy of the Church of England have been their constant and uncompromising enemies; that they have been the most tenacious to hold, the *last* to relinquish, the smallest particle of unjust power. Every privilege Dissenters possess has been extorted, rather than given; and if we might judge from the visible reluctance with which certain privileges have been conceded on the part of the Church, we should be led to conclude, that as it respects a very large portion of her clergy, the tolerance of the Church of England is, like the peaceful spirit of some old men, rather the result of decrepitude and impotence, than of principle. Inability to do wrong, is doubtless one of the most effectual safe-guards of virtue. But whatever may be the real feelings of the clergy of the Church of England upon this point, certain it is that two facts are obvious, the

one, that the Church of England has always retained, to the last, all the power she could retain, and secondly, has ever submitted to have her formidable talons clipped with the most unequivocal signs of dissatisfaction.

But the "Observer" is not content with saying, that the Church of England is *very* tolerant, or as tolerant as any other; the strongest superlatives, it appears, are no more than necessary to express the perfection of her charity. "The *farthest possible* from intolerance!" Never shall I think this while her ministers are compelled to close their pulpits and to avoid intercommunion with those whom they themselves acknowledge to be wise, learned, holy ministers of Christ; never shall I think this, till Churchmen themselves shall pray Parliament to relieve them from the hard, the hateful necessity of exacting church rates from men who disapprove of their principles, and receive no benefit from their ministry! When we see the Church of England showing, by such *active* steps, her disposition to relinquish some of the most oppressive privileges of her vast monopoly, we shall be better disposed to regard her as entitled to the hyperbolical praise which we have just quoted.

The latter part of the last paragraph, touching the "charge" of the Rev. Andrew Reed, is really what we never expected to see in the "Christian Observer." We will venture to say, that not the remotest thought of insulting the Church of England, or of implying that there was no other church than that of the Congregationalists at "Hounslow," ever occurred to the mind of the reverend author. Had this paragraph been

read to us by any one as an *extract* from the "Christian Observer," we should have said, "It cannot be: it must be an extract from the 'British Magazine,' or the 'Christian Remembrancer;' nay, it would not be altogether unworthy of Blackwood; but as to the 'Christian Observer'—it is impossible." But we have seen it, and are, therefore, constrained to believe.

We have often thought, with pleasure of the "Christian Observer," as affording, in part, a refutation of a statement often made, that the evangelical party are as bigotted to the Church, and as hostile to Dissenters, as are the orthodox; and we trust to be able to quote it in proof of this again. At the same time, we are free to confess, that there have been articles in it within the last few months, which would tend rather to corroborate than confute the above assertion.

To conclude, without pretending to justify the sentiments or the conduct of every individual Dissenter, I do most explicitly deny the truth of the charges which the Observer here makes. If, however, your contemporary thinks that Dissenters will ever disguise their sentiments, or refrain from endeavouring to diffuse them, merely to avoid offending the Church, I trust he will find himself mistaken. I hope that a false complaisance to the Establishment will never lead Dissenters to a compromise of opinion, or induce them to disguise the fact that an establishment, in their estimation, is pernicious to the interests of religion.

I am,
Yours respectfully,
NONCON.

POETRY.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

THE pow'r that gave creation life
 Can call it back again,
 Or break, in anarchy and strife,
 Nature's harmonious reign.
 If then, to man, the topmost link
 In the terrestrial chain,
 Be given mis'ry, shall he dare
 His Maker's will t' arraign?
 Yet there are depths of human woe
 So dark, so fathomless,
 That hope, which cheers all else below,
 Can never reach to bless.

London, Jan. 1833.

So dark, so fathomless, that while
 To heaven faith lifts her eye,
 Feeling and reason both rebel;
 "Say, why is this?" they cry.

Creation's Lord!—This lovely world,
 And man, thy goodness tell;
 And tho' thy ways are wonderful,
 "Thou doest all things well!"
 If, then, we murmur 'gainst our lot,
 Compel us, Lord, to run
 For deep humility, to thee;
 And pray, "Thy will be done."

B.

STANZAS.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."—Matthew iv. 19, 20.

O LAY not up upon this earth
 Your hopes, your joys, your treasure,
 Here sorrow clouds the pilgrim's path,
 And blights each opening pleasure;
 Here moths corrupt, here rust destroys,
 And thieves are oft invading,—
 Above are found eternal joys,
 And bowers of bliss unfading.

O thither let your souls arise,
 Your warmest hopes be tending;
 With eager grasp, pursue the prize
 Where angel forms are bending.
 Earth's joys like dew-drops fade away,
 Like clouds its visions vanish,
 Above, no night can chase the day,
 Those joys no change can banish.

Above earth's fleeting follies soar,
 Its trammels burst asunder,
 And let your ravish'd thoughts explore
 Yon radiant scenes of wonder.

Hadleigh.

There glorious wreaths, there golden lyres,
 With thrilling notes are sounding;
 And bliss the ransom'd soul inspires—
 No barb of sorrow wounding.

All, all below must fade and die,
 The dearest hopes we cherish,
 Scenes touched with brightest radiancy,
 Are all decreed to perish:
 The stars their orbits must forsake,
 The fading sun his station,
 The earth shall to its centre shake,
 "When God shall judge each nation."

Then man, be wise, thy constant care
 To purer joys be given,
 Nor let delusive objects share
 The place of bliss and heaven.
 Let "things unseen" with potent force,
 (Alone possessing merit)
 Lead upwards to its pristine source,
 Thy pure, immortal spirit.

M. S.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

Narrative of Facts, characterizing the Supernatural Manifestations in Members of Mr. Irving's Congregation, and other Individuals, in England and Scotland, and formerly in the Writer himself. By Robert Baxter. London: James Nisbet. 1833.

THIS is one of the most extraordinary tragico-comic productions which it ever fell to our lot to peruse. Were it not for the melancholy effects produced by the prophetic follies of Mr. Irving's gifted ones, the rich absurdities which have been, for the last year and a half, enacted amongst them, would afford matter of unwearied merriment. As it is, we have found it impossible to peruse the pamphlet which we are now reviewing, without indulging every now and then in something more than a smile. But we must briefly explain the circumstances under which this little work makes its appearance, and then proceed to offer some observations on its contents.

This pamphlet then, contains the solemn recantation of Mr. Robert Baxter, once the Coryphæus of Mr. Irving's prophetic band. He was for a long time listened to with the profoundest attention; on many occasions he hesitated not to rebuke Mr. Irving himself; was acknowledged by the rest of the "gifted" brethren and sisters, to be eminently influenced by the Spirit of God; and was implicitly believed in the most astoundingly absurd and childish prophecies,—which prophecies, we need not say, have turned out most lamentable failures. This failure (for even

with the gifted ones, who seem in general to have achieved a most triumphant victory over reason and common sense, such facts are stubborn things) was the principal means of convincing Mr. Baxter that he had been the victim of most awful delusion.

The tone and spirit in which the book is written, leave on the mind a strong impression, that the author has been perfectly sincere throughout; that he is most truly and painfully convinced of the folly of his past conduct; and that he is desirous that the partners and victims of his fanaticism may be reclaimed as well as himself. Still, though he may justly challenge credit for sincerity, and claims the most compassionate pity, he cannot expect, after the part he has acted, that the public should feel the slightest respect for his judgment. In truth, this pamphlet only gives further proof that his judgment is radically unsound, and leaves little room for wonder that he should have swallowed down the most inordinate absurdities. For though Mr. Baxter renounces the "manifestations" as of the Spirit of God, and justly thinks it blasphemy to attribute the contradicting, incoherent jargon to such a source, he will not give up the idea of supernatural agency! So he actually declares it to be his opinion, that the "gifted" have been imposed upon by some evil spirit, in other words, have been inspired by the devil. To this we must really demur. That Satan has a great deal to do

with the scenes of unutterable madness and folly, in which Mr. Baxter has been so conspicuous, we have little doubt; but then we think it was only after the ordinary style in which he exerts his spiritual agency. He has doubtless triumphed in the specimens of blind passion and infirm judgment, which have been exhibited; he has doubtless fostered fanatical tendencies, by offering appropriate temptations, and played upon the weakness, pride, vanity, and ignorance of his too ready victims. But to suppose it one of those grand schemes of delusion which our arch-adversary thought not unworthy of a mighty display of supernatural power,—as to this we really must remain utterly incredulous. Our incredulity has, in our opinion, many good and sufficient reasons to justify it; but if there were no other, this would be enough for us, that the whole delusion is too *ineffably stupid* for the arch-fiend. We cannot recognize in these idiot drivellings, (which can impose only on a few, are already beginning to be thoroughly exposed and despised, and in a few years will be forgotten altogether,) the energies of that mighty "prince of the power of the air," who forms such magnificent plans of deception, and suits them with such fatal skill to the varying states of ages and of nations. He has, doubtless, encouraged this delusion as a by-plot, which human folly had formed to his hand; but we really believe he may be acquitted of exerting any supernatural agency in what may be so well accounted for on other grounds. No; this is not a "*nodus vindice dignus*" which cannot be cut without the aid of some superhuman agency. The vehement ravings of madness, or the inane incoherencies of idiocy, may be as justly traced to a divine or

diabolical inspiration, as these monstrous follies of the Irving school.

It is not at all wonderful to us that these extravagancies should exist. There have been nearly as great before, and will be again. The very circumstance on which the "gifted" lay chief stress, as an evidence of inspiration, is that very circumstance which, in our opinion, is the most suspicious; we mean the extreme vehemence of manner—the unnatural tones—the contortions of countenance with which the prophets and the prophetesses "give forth," to use the technicalities of this new school, "their utterances." These convulsions of spiritual epilepsy (if we may use such an expression), this sybilline vehemence of manner, (especially as there is nothing *but* this imposing air,) ought just to have operated as the most effectual caution.

The simple fact is, that there will always be a number of persons in the world of marvellously imbecile judgments, ungovernable imaginations, and excitable passions. Peculiarities of the times may aggravate these several symptoms of mental disease into a most incurable malady. When such persons are brought together, as they are sure to be by a natural affinity, they act and re-act upon one another with a constantly increasing power, and become, as the history of all fanaticism shows, capable of stimulating each other to any pitch of extravagance. A great variety of motives, mingled in different degrees, and operating with different power on each individual, contribute to the general effect. While some are simply deluded, others, like a certain prophetess of Mr. Irving's, feel that they are deluding others, and are attempting to delude themselves; in many instances, probably, the parties are

both deluded and deluding. Even the most unequivocal hypocrisy, however, becomes in time, by a natural consequence, as well as an appropriate punishment, self-delusion.

In the meantime, in many instances, there is a subtle play of inferior motives operating on the mind, perhaps almost unconsciously.—Pride, vanity, ambition, (reckless ambition, what strange forms dost thou assume!) all exert their several influences. The opposition and ridicule of the world only strengthen obstinacy, and engender a proud contempt of the opinions of the "carnal and the fleshly;" and, lastly, the more madly the parties have committed themselves to their delusion, the stronger do all the motives become to maintain and defend it; every step they take rendering retreat more difficult and hazardous. We are far from saying, that they are conscious of the degree in which these motives operate; far from it; but that they do operate, we shall have occasion to show from Mr. Baxter's own confession.

Mr. Baxter himself acknowledges that the "gifts" were, (as in the Church of Corinth,) objects of strong "desire." This alone, operating in a mind already inclined to believe in the truth of the "manifestations," would exert a fearful influence, and tend powerfully to produce the very effects which, it is pretended, are supernatural.

The circumstances under which the "manifestations" were first "given out" were quite sufficient evidence, to any sound mind, of their clearly human origin. The very extravagances of manner which were looked upon by the weak and the nervous as such proofs of inspiration, were regarded by the rational as conclusive of delusion.

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The absurdity of supposing that a jargon unintelligible to all, even to the speakers themselves, was the gift of God, or that any gift of God could be bestowed for a purpose so senseless as that of filling the eyes of the curious with stupid wonder; the entire absence of those miraculous powers which have always been considered the appropriate, the indispensable, attestations to a divine commission; the evident influence which the comparatively petty events of our own nation and age had upon the narrow views of these prophets and prophetesses; the disproportionate importance which they attached to what was passing and temporary; the utter contrast which in every particular their matter and manner manifested to the grandeur, calmness, majesty, sublimity, and importance, of the veritable disclosures of apostolic men; the moral effects of this new doctrine, engendering, as it did, the most insufferable arrogance, bitterness, and uncharitableness:—all these were, in the opinion of reasonable persons, enough to stamp the whole manifestations as delusion.

But what will the public think now, when they have read Mr. Baxter's "Narrative?" When they find that prophecies innumerable, and most ludicrously specific, have turned out utter failures; that attempts at miracles have been abortive; that prophets and prophetesses have contradicted each other; that those who once unanimously recognized each other's undoubted inspiration "in the power," (as the jargon hath it,) do not scruple to charge each other now with being the victims of Satanic delusion, or of "proud imaginations" equally seductive; that Mr. Irving and his infallible band of prophets and prophetesses have shifted their opinions just as often as the failure of their hopes compelled them

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to botch up the broken cobwebs of their delusions; that so palpable have been the contradictions which those proverbially stubborn things, "facts," have given to the dictates of inspiration, that Mr. Irving (in direct opposition to his earlier doctrine) now declares, that the same person may, at one time, speak by the Spirit of God, and at another, by the spirit of the Devil; that all they now want, therefore, is a "discerner of spirits," just to tell them *which is which*; that for this "gift" the Church tarries!! &c. &c. Very unfortunate this alternation of heavenly and infernal inspirations—very unfortunate indeed!

There is only one thing more extraordinary than these manifestations themselves, and that is, that the manifold failures and contradictions which ought to have overwhelmed, with confusion, those who have acted a part in them, has not shaken their impregnable confidence. Much of their time seems now taken up in patching up that ravelled web which breaks in one part as fast as they mend it in another; in endeavouring to reconcile those contradictions, which are too palpable to be denied; and when efforts at reconciliation are abortive, they gravely resolve that it is sin to doubt. The following instances are most marvellously to the purpose.

"Next, after a short interval, came a letter from Mr. Irving, which yet more perplexed me. He said, 'This moment the Lord hath sent me a very wonderful and wonderfully gracious message, by our dear sister, Miss E. C., concerning the time (that within three years and a half the saints should be translated to heaven) which you have been made so often to put forth. Rebuking me for having repeated it, and counselling me not to do it any more; declaring the word to be a true word, but containing a mystery; declaring that the day is not known, and commanding me to write to you, to say that you must not repeat this in the flesh, but suffer the Spirit to say it, how and

when he pleaseth.' Mr. Irving then added, 'Here I leave it without any comment whatever—I am not equal to the work of commenting upon these words of the Lord—I am content to walk in the darkness. The same message which said, that the word you spake was true, said also, that the day is not known, and that it is a mystery, and that you, as well as myself, had erred in repeating in the flesh, this matter of the time. The Lord lead us aright.' I was amazed at this message, for constantly had I been made in power to declare the time, and to explain it, and enforce it; and more than once I had been made to enjoin ministers publicly to preach it in the flesh, though they had no gift. I had then nearly fallen into the persuasion, that my gift could not be a true gift, or, that I had so mistaken the leadings of it, as to be no more worthy to exercise it. But the recognitions and encouragements given me by Mrs. C., and Miss E. C. in London, held me up against this conclusion."—pp. 92, 93.

"Being anxious to communicate with Mr. Irving, I travelled on to London, and reached him on the morning of his appearance before the presbytery of London. Calling him and Mr. J. C. apart, I told them my conviction that we had all been speaking by a lying spirit, and not by the Spirit of the Lord. He said it was impossible God could have sent us strong delusions, for that was his final judgment upon the wicked, and we, at least, thought ourselves seeking after the Lord, and desiring his glory. I answered, I believed God had sent it as a chastisement for pride and lofty imaginations; that we had been lifted up in our own hearts, and God would humble us. He was astounded; but asked me to stay with them a little. I replied, I could not stay without rebuking the utterance, if it were made by any of the speakers in my presence, and as he would not suffer this, we parted. I saw him again in the evening, and on the succeeding morning I endeavoured to convince him of his error of doctrine, and of our delusions concerning the work of the Spirit, but he was so shut up, he could not see either. I particularly pressed upon Miss E. C. and Mrs. C., and upon him also, the non fulfilment of the word, and particularly the falseness of that prophecy which they, as well as myself, had given, that God would guard the utterance of his prophets, and not suffer Satan to speak by them; whereas, in the case of Mr. T. alluded to in Mr. Irving's letter, he, who was, and I believe is still, received as a prophet,

had, in the midst of the congregation, with tongues and in English, spoken evil of Mr. Irving; and Miss E. C. had since, in utterance, declared he spoke it of Satan. They, however, could not see the non-fulfilment in the other cases; and in this case, they said, we must have mistaken the meaning of the utterance; that it could not mean God would keep the utterance always, but when they were speaking, he would not suffer Satan to mingle words with his word. A most miserable subterfuge.

"The argument upon which Mr. Irving mainly relied for parrying the difficulties, was this; that the same person might at one moment, speak by the Spirit of God, and the next moment by an evil spirit. He urged, therefore, that those things which had failed were from the false spirit, and those which were fulfilled were of God. I had the most distinct remembrance, when first I heard Mr. Irving preach upon the utterances, that he preached the utterances being the voice of God, were pure water without admixture—that he might in his expositions, as a man, fail, or fall into error; but in the word of the Lord, ministered by the prophets, in these utterances, the most entire and implicit confidence might be placed, as in every respect and purely 'the Truth.' Out of this position he was, however, evidently driven by the appalling fact of one of the prophets, before all the congregation, denouncing him as the cause of the Lord's anger against the congregation. This denunciation, coming with every usual demonstration of power and tongues. The only solution now to be found was, that the utterance at one time might be of God, and at another time of Satan, even in the same person. For if this were not admitted, Mr. T. being by the prophets recognized as having spoken by God in his former utterances, and by Satan in this, would either overturn the whole fabric of the spiritual gifts, and falsify the claims of all the prophets, or must be himself still received as a prophet, notwithstanding his false utterance.

"The mere enunciation of the proposition of a varying origin, whilst the outward demonstration of utterance remained the same, was enough to shake even the nerves of Mr. Irving. To be under the necessity of telling such a fact to his congregation, and thereby assuring them that they could no longer give credence to the utterances, without deciding upon the origin of each message; to tell them, moreover, that no one could decide this without the gift of the discernment of

spirits; and, lastly, that no member of his church yet possessed this gift: this would seem beyond the courage of any minister, and beyond the power of belief of any people. To this, however, was Mr. Irving reduced, and to this were his people subjected.

"It was attempted to decide the origin of the utterance in the mind of the speakers from whom it came, by prescribing a certain frame, *e. g.* a calm sense of the love of God in Christ, and of our abiding therein, as the proof of the utterances from the Spirit of God; and an opposite state of mind, as a proof of the utterance being deceitful. This, however, I could experimentally contradict."
—pp. 118–120.

All this affords lamentable proof of the complete mastery which religious delusion may attain over the mind; of the prostration of intellect which fanaticism supposes, and of the tenacity with which we cling to doctrines long cherished, on which fond, and, perhaps, ambitious hopes, have been founded and which despair, and shame, and the fear of the world's ridicule concur to forbid us to renounce till the last.

Many of these utterances (especially some of the prophetic utterances,) are the veriest pieces of inanity and silliness that we have ever read. We can compare them to nothing but dreams, during which the reasoning faculty seems entirely suspended, and the imagination and fancy have just a licence for bringing together all monstrous and all incongruous things; or they sometimes remind us of the incoherent gabble of children, when professedly talking nonsense. The "gifted" seem to abandon themselves utterly to the wildest imaginings; while the judgment appears absolutely extinguished. If a person were to say to himself, "Now I will talk, as sober and connected sense, just what the wildest train of the most arbitrary associations may suggest" he could not outdo Mr. Irving's prophets.

"The power which then rested on me was far more mighty than before, laying down my mind and body in perfect obedience, and carrying me on without confusion or excitement. Excitement there might appear to a by-stander, but to myself it was calmness and peace. Every former visitation of the power had been very brief; but now it continued, and seemed to rest upon me all the evening. The things I was made to utter, flashed in upon my mind without forethought, without expectation, and without any plan or arrangement."—pp. 13, 14.

The chief prophecies which turned out entire failures were as follows;—that the Reform Bill would not pass; that the Duke of Wellington was to be Prime Minister again; that after a period of forty days from a given date the "baptism of fire" should descend; that Mr. Baxter was to reprove the Chancellor, and be put into prison for it; that young Napoleon (!) was to be "energized of Satan," and show himself the "man of sin;" that Mr. Baxter was to bear witness in the House of Commons, and at Cambridge, on the same day, and that he was, therefore, to be miraculously conveyed from one place to the other as Philip was.

We might also mention a number of silly predictions about the King and Queen; the revelations of Mr. B. being separated for the special service of the church, and, for this purpose, called to renounce his family, &c. all which was duly contradicted by Miss E. C. in a counter-revelation; the prophecy of his being called to the apostolic office, and of the gifts of signs and wonders; ditto of Mr. Irving and others; of the restoration of the ten tribes, who were declared to be the North American Indians (!) and of the appearance of the "powers" in the Canadian Chief, who at that time was returning to his countrymen, &c. &c. We might mention several other instances, but this is a tolerable catalogue. The follow-

ing extracts will illustrate what we have said.

"Into these trumpets, and those following, I have put, for connexion's sake, the opening of some part of the symbols, which was given in subsequent utterances, but in the utterance at this time there was a further opening of these four trumpets, which followed on in the train of utterance after the whole had been noticed; reiterating that the first trumpet was already sounded, and the second was at hand—that the Reform Bill would not pass—that the people thought they had it, but it should not pass—that then should the second trumpet be sounded, and the mountain, burning with fire, be cast into the sea—that the people would then rush against the military, and the sword be drawn—that the people would be overcome, but the principles of the military would be sapped—that the great Captain of Waterloo would again be made Prime Minister, and that it was he who should take to pieces the constitution, and be the instrument of fulfilling the third and fourth trumpets. From this time, as I was made to speak in the power on the interpretation of these trumpets, the certainty of the rejection of the Reform Bill was looked to by all the followers of the power in the country, and when the Bill was finally passed, which was after I had abandoned the work, it was no slight additional proof of the falseness of this Spirit of prophecy."—p. 61.

"The day, [the fortieth day] however passed over without any manifestation of the power which had been foretold. I was made in power to speak to Mr. A —, declaring the Lord had called him to the office of apostle; that he would receive the endowment of an apostle, and speedily go forth to Ireland, to build the Lord a spiritual church there. On the disappointment of our hopes for the day, we all seemed to pause, expecting that the succeeding day might realize, what the present did not furnish."—p. 70.

"Most glorious prophecies, as they seemed to be, followed these declarations, and great fulness of development as to the constitution of the spiritual church; and its progress through the earth to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

"We were overjoyed with these communications, and in fulness of hope and confidence, awaited the day of fulfilment. The interval was filled up by very powerful and frequent utterances

in interpretation of Scripture and in confirmation of the work. The day named arrived, and in the evening an utterance from the power, 'Kneel down, and receive the baptism by fire.' We knelt down, lifting up prayer to God continually. Nothing, however, ensued. Again and again we knelt, and again and again we prayed, but still no fulfilment. Surprising as it may seem, my faith was not shaken, but day by day, for a long time, we continued in prayer and supplication, continually expecting the baptism."—p. 90, 91.

"A few mornings afterwards, at breakfast at Mr. Irving's, a conversation arose upon America, and I mentioned what had been revealed to me concerning it; and Mr. Irving asked, with reference to some utterance, whether I should conclude it referred to the ten tribes. I paused, for the power rested upon me, and after a little time it was distinctly revealed in the power, and I was made to utter that the American Indians were the lost ten tribes, and that they should, within the three years and a half appointed for the spiritual ministry, be gathered back into their own land, and be settled there before the days of vengeance set in—that the chief, who was now in London, was a chosen vessel of the Lord, to lead them back—that he should be endowed with power from on high, in all signs and mighty wonders, and should lead them back though in unbelief—that he would receive his power here, and be speedily sent forth to them. After this I went with Mr. Irving, Miss E. C., (who had been present at the foregoing prophecy) and several others to a Jewish institution, where I was again made to reiterate to the Jews there present, the promise of speedy restoration, and vengeance upon all their enemies. . . . The complete failure of this prophecy is very manifest. The chief went away to his countrymen an unbeliever in the work, and none of the powers have been at all manifested."—pp. 80, 81, 82.

We have every now and then some proofs that human passions are not extinct amongst these "gifted ones." We often think we can perceive a manifest pleasure in the administering of rebuke, and that to one another; all which, as Mr. Baxter says, is easily confounded with "jealousy for God." Then the prophets and prophetesses often betray, as it appears to us,

a jealousy of each other. Miss E. C. in particular is almost sure, somehow or other, to mar Mr. Baxter's "utterances," by some perverse counter-revelations. We might adduce several instances, but the following must suffice. It is a most singular account of the great cause of Mr. Baxter's separation from Mr. Irving. It appears that Mr. Baxter had written to Mr. Irving, "*in the power*," setting before him some of his heretical opinions, and expostulating with him thereupon. Now, let us see what the "power" says in reply. The following is Mr. Irving's answer:

"London, 21st April, 1832.

"My dear Brother.—Read this letter with your eye on God.—We have great need, especially the spiritual amongst us, to walk humbly with the Lord. Your first letter, containing the utterance of the Spirit, without any expression of his intention in sending it to me, led me very deeply to ponder the subject of our Lord's flesh, and to cry upon the Lord to examine me; and to the same exercise of soul had I been drawn by the utterance of the Spirit, and the experience of the spiritual of my flock in these days past. These things put me into a fit condition for receiving the full impression of your last letter, which arrived last night, after I had preached a sermon on the Holy Generation of the Flesh of Christ. This I had done, in order to express anew, before my people, with all caution and consideration, what I firmly believe to be the truth; and to guard them against the effect of any rash and unguarded expressions which I might at any time have used. All night long, my soul, sleeping and waking, was exercised upon the subject of your last letter. And it being wonderfully ordered in God's providence, that Mrs. C. should be in town for a day or two; and that Miss E. C., though desirous to go home before breakfast, was so burdened as not to be able to go: These two prophetesses of the Lord, who have been his mouth of wisdom and of warning to me and my church in all perplexities; I called along with my wife, who had read your letter and read it to me, and having spread the whole matter before the Lord, and twice besought his presence, we proceeded to read your letters in order.—Upon your first letter, there was no utterance of the

Spirit nor expression of any kind amongst us, but that of assent—When we had read the two first pages of the second, wherein you reason upon the word of the Spirit, 'He has erred, he has erred,' given to you upon two sentences of my book; and bring forward your views of our Lord's flesh, and of the believer's holiness, in contra-distinction from mine—we paused; and seeing there was so manifest a discrepancy between us, I solemnly besought the Lord that he would speak his own mind in the matter. Instantly the Spirit came upon Miss E. C., and after speaking in a very grieved tone and spirit in a tongue, she was made to declare many words which I will not take upon me to attempt to repeat, seeing the Spirit hath discountenanced such attempts. But the substance was most precisely this—that you had been snared by departing from the word and the testimony—that I had maintained the truth, and the Lord was well pleased with me for it—that I must not flinch now, but be more bold for it than heretofore—that he had honoured me for it, and I must not draw back—that in some words I had erred, and that the word of the Spirit by you was therefore true,—and that if I waited upon the Lord, he would shew them me by his Spirit, but that he had forgiven it because he knew my heart was right towards him—that I had maintained the truth and must not draw back from maintaining it. Thereupon we knelt down, and having confessed my sin, and thanked him for his mercy; I proceeded to intreat him for you, that you might be delivered from the snare in which you were taken concerning the flesh of Christ and the holiness of the believer. This done, I sought to recover and recount the substance of the utterance as above given, that by their help I might report it to you exactly. My wife was mentioning a doubt, whether it should not simply be left to the Lord, and not dealt with in the understanding at all; seeing that in your letter you had gone astray by commenting in your own understanding on the words of the Spirit, 'He hath erred,' as applicable to two sentences of my book, and applied them to my whole doctrine, which the Spirit had just declared to be 'the truth,' that 'must be maintained:' when Mrs. C. was made to speak in a tongue with great authority and strength, and immediately after in English, to the effect, that you had stumbled greatly by bringing your own carnal understanding to spiritual things—that truth in the inward parts, the law of God in the heart, wrought in us the fulfilment of the

righteousness of the law in all our members; and that union with Jesus brought into us the holiness of Jesus in body, soul, and spirit—that the Lord would have a church upon the earth, holy as he is holy; the light of the world as he is the light of the world—that some had sought to bring this about in the flesh—that you had been snared in the opposite extreme of denying it altogether, and making a distinction between Christ's holiness, and that of his church—that you must be informed of it, because this it was which was preventing the work of the Lord. There was a third utterance through Miss E. C. to teach me that Satan sought to overthrow my confidence in the truth, and to bring me into a snare, but that I was called upon to maintain it more firmly than ever.

"There were no more utterances, but when we came to that part of your letter where you say, 'Concerning the vessels by whom he speaks, you, have fearfully provoked him, and they are ready to burst asunder under your hands. There was great indignation felt by both the vessels of the Lord present, and great sense of injustice felt by myself. For, Oh! dear brother, I have done all things to know and follow the mind of the Lord in respect of them. It was indeed said, I think in the Spirit, that this in you was the same Spirit of 'The accuser of the brethren,' which hath manifested itself lately amongst us in one of the gifted persons who spoke evil of me in the midst of the congregation. But the Lord hath showed him that though it was with power, the power was not from God but from Satan, to whom, by hard and unjust thoughts of me, he had opened the door. Ah, dear brother, you have surely been much overseen in some way or other—search it out. The thing you spoke of F. and of Miss H., was not of God. I fear, and am persuaded in my own mind, that you have not discriminated duly, what is of God and what is not of him; and that sin in this matter, undiscerned and unconfessed, hath brought on greater falls, as we have seen amongst ourselves; and that now you are brought to oppose that very doctrine which alone can bring the church to be meet for her bridegroom:—That as he was holy in the flesh, so are we, through the grace of regeneration, brought to be holy—planted in a holy standing—the flesh dead to sin, as his flesh was dead to sin—and that by the baptism of the Holy Ghost we are brought into the fellowship of his power and fulness, to do the works which he also did, and greater works than these.'"—pp. 103-106.

"Dear Brother!—And it was said in the Spirit that this in you was the same spirit of the Accuser of the Brethren!"—Tender! The rest of the letter is ineffable jargon.

The remarks which Mr. Baxter makes on the comparative secrecy with which the gifts are *generally* exercised, and on the suspicion which such a circumstance necessarily casts on the whole matter, are very excellent; while the tendency which such a course has to involve the parties in still deeper delusion, by removing every check to extravagance, is well pointed out in the following passage:—

"So long as their proceedings are open to the public eye, there will always be some warning and remonstrance set before them, upon the development of any new choice. But when shut up to themselves, the mind is gradually darkened, and the delusion becomes daily stronger, until they are ripe for each successive stage of the mystery of iniquity.—As a proof of this, I may allude to the fact, that they are now avowedly exercising apostolic functions, upon the mere command of the voice, without pretending to have the signs of an apostle, 'In signs and wonders, and mighty deeds;' and the individual, who has been thus set apart for the apostolic office, prays, in their meetings in the following strain:—'Lord, am I not thine apostle?—yet where are the signs of my apostleship?—where are the wonders and mighty deeds?—O Lord, send them down upon us,' &c. He has, as an apostle, and in the name of an apostle, laid hands on several, and ordained them to the ministerial office, as evangelists and elders; yet it is not pretended that the manifestation of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost follows with the laying on of his hands!"—pp. 84, 85.

Of the desperate expedients to which they are often driven in attempting to reconcile contradictions, our readers will find in addition to what we have already cited a rare specimen in pages 26, 27. With such a system of interpretation, indeed, few difficulties can be too gigantic for solution.

Our review has already stretched far beyond the limits we had in-

tended to assign to it, but the importance of exposing this pernicious heresy, must be our apology. For further particulars we must refer to the pamphlet itself; at the same time, we feel convinced that we have already said enough to show that the "gifted" are absolutely frenzied with strong excitement. Mr. Baxter assures us that he has been quite sincere in all his extravagances; and he certainly writes with the air of sincerity. Charity enjoins us to hope that his former associates are also sincere. But though acquitted of the guilt of actual hypocrisy, they still stand chargeable with a criminal abandonment of the faculties which God has bestowed upon us for the ascertaining of the truth; with an insane indulgence of excitement; with a disregard of the clearest evidence against their pretensions, that of *facts*; and with a resort to the most childish mysticism and the most wretched subterfuges, to patch up a system which the most undeniable facts show to be untenable.

Two Letters, by "Fiat Justitia," Author of a Letter to the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, in Reply; the First to a Churchman, who condemns him for going too far; the Second to a Dissenter, who expostulates with him for not going far enough; with an Appendix, &c. London: Holdsworth and Ball. 1832.

THE letter addressed by "Fiat Justitia," to the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, will be remembered by many of our readers, as a production of great, and even extraordinary merit. It exhibited a combination of excellencies very rarely found in the polemical pamphlets of the day; while it was singularly free from the faults by which publications of that class are usually disfigured. Considered merely as a piece of argument, it would be difficult to praise it too highly. So skilful was the

choice of the ground, so just and forcible the reasoning, so vigilant the exclusion of every thing doubtful, and every thing extraneous, that, had it been opposed to any thing less invulnerable than prejudice and bigotry, we should have predicted its complete and universal success. Its principal charm, however, consisted, undoubtedly, in the fine spirit of Christian charity which breathes in every line, and threw a kind of ethereal sanctity and beauty over the whole. Without any ostentatious professions of liberality, or any approach to the meanness of adulation, without weakening his argument, or betraying his cause, the author maintained throughout, the tone and temper of the disciple whom Jesus loved. The style, though somewhat careless and diffuse, bore the general stamp of a manly, idiomatic simplicity, diversified, at times, with all those unlaboured felicities which drop from the pen of a man of genius more intent upon the matter than the manner of his compositions.

The pamphlet before us bears, in many respects, a strong resemblance to its predecessor. It is, however, much more discursive and miscellaneous; presenting, indeed, so copious a variety of interesting topics, that the full discussion of them all would probably extend our review into some distant number of the year 1834. It is, indeed, no more than justice to the writer to state that, with the exception of the first letter, which is devoted to a particular purpose; the greater part of the pamphlet seems to be designedly tentative, rather than dogmatic. It is thrown together, for the most part, in the form of doubts, inquiries, and suggestions; and has little of the regularity and compactness of a

dissertation. We should certainly have preferred a more comprehensive and systematic disquisition from such a writer; yet we are glad to meet with even the "*disjecta membra*" of his speculations. The hints of a man of genius are often worth more than a whole encyclopædia of elaborate mediocrities, as the rudest sketch which bears the free and vigorous touch of a master is infinitely preferable to the heavy completeness of an imitator. And even when we are obliged to dissent altogether from our author's conclusions, (which we acknowledge is *very frequently the case*) we cannot refuse him the praise which the great modern critic bestowed upon a distinguished contemporary, "that the errors in his researches are sometimes more to the purpose than the successful inquiries of others."

The first of the two letters before us may be dismissed with little comment. It is addressed to "a Layman," who, it appears, under a peculiar influence of the moon, composed and published a reply to the Letter to Mr. Noel. This notable production of the "Layman's" may be safely pronounced a master-piece of its kind. Like a certain other spirited and pithy epistle, it is "very brief, and exceeding good senseless." The argument of Fiat Justitia's Letter to Mr. Noel was exhibited with a perspicuity which seemed to defy the possibility of misconception: yet the "Layman" has contrived, with a steady consistency in blundering, to pervert and misrepresent it throughout. He cries *eureka* over a truism; and announces the wildest paradoxism with the air of one who is stating an axiom in the mathematics. He lays a wager where he ought to construct an argument, denies the most unquestionable

facts, and holds up the worst absurdities and corruptions of his church as miracles of sanctity and wisdom. Even where the *British Critic* forgets his second nature under a momentary seizure of sense and candour, the Layman supports his character, and retains, unaltered to the last, his intrepid impudence and folly. We do not pretend to guess the motives which induced Fiat Justitia to notice the challenge of this small assailant. He did not, surely, expect to enlighten the understanding or abate the insolence of the Layman. He could not suppose that any body capable of mistaking his "Brief Reply" for sense or logic, was within the reach of reasonable conviction. Nor was there need of any illustration or defence of his Letter to Mr. Noel, which had already exhausted the argument, and left the clerical seceders from the British and Foreign Bible Society without excuse. We must therefore acknowledge ourselves of the number of those to whom he alludes in the 39th page, as considering him to have "bestowed on the Layman and his Letter far more attention than either deserves."

We turn with much greater interest to the Second Letter and the Appendix, of which we shall present our readers with a short analysis.

The Second Letter is in reply to a communication from "A Dissenter," who conceived that certain parts of Fiat Justitia's first publication were open to exception. The "Dissenter" conceives that Fiat Justitia has spoken too favourably of the principles and discipline of Episcopacy, that he forms an extravagant idea of the good which might be expected to arise out of the institution of a Reformed Episcopal Church;

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and that his language on this subject is likely "to puff up the body of the clergy to whom it applies." After a short and very amicable address to the "Dissenter," by way of introduction, our author gives a brief, but clear and forcible statement of his reasons for dissenting from the English Establishment. The kind and degree of its connexion with the State; the necessity of subscribing to the article which declares that "The Book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God;" and the sectarian and schismatical character of the Establishment, are, in the mind of our author, invincible objections to conformity. He thinks that the same reasons ought to induce the Evangelical clergy to dissent; but recommends their forming themselves into an Independent Episcopal Church, rather than adopting the peculiarities of worship and government which distinguish the Congregationalists. For this he assigns as a reason his belief that there is not any system of church government, as at present existing, as of divine right; that Episcopacy, separated from the State, would be a very harmless thing, and perhaps come nearer to the primitive model (if there be one) than Congregationalism itself; and that a change like this would draw attention to the subject of religion in thousands who are now invulnerable to every attack. He is inclined to prefer the use of a Liturgy in public worship, in connexion with public prayer, to either the one or the other, exclusively and alone. He suspects that no system as at present existing and administered is exactly suited to the condition of the country; and, while he deprecates the sudden

destruction of the church by violence and rapine, demands a thorough reform of the entire system, to the efficacy and completeness of which reform he believes the recommended secession of the Evangelical clergy would materially contribute. He concludes with some very just and beautiful sentiments on the necessity of an enlarged and Catholic charity on the part of real Christians, which shall induce them to merge inferior differences, to realize the grandeur of the principles on which they are agreed; which shall "raise every sect above its petty partialities, and at last fuse all into one great and consolidated whole." The Appendix, which is a kind of literary portfolio filled with "divers and sundry" matters, is distributed into four leading sections. Of these No. I. is occupied with a letter from Mr. Noel, to *Fiat Justitia*, in acknowledgment of his former pamphlet, and the remarks of our author in reply. In these he again exposes the flagrant inconsistency of the clerical separatists from the Bible Society, and the sectarian character of the Church of England. No. II., which consists of "Additional Notes," animadverts upon the pretended unity of the Establishment, and the portentous mischief inevitably consequent upon the use of certain parts of the Burial and Baptismal Services. From the first of these Additional Notes we cannot resist the temptation of extracting a passage relating to the imaginary oneness of sentiment in the church; the cuckoo-cry of nearly all her eulogists and defenders.

"The reader may sometimes have observed in a lump of ice, feathers, bits of straw, pieces of earth, and fragments of crockery, all bound together, and kept together in one united mass, by a power distinct from that of natural affinity or attraction between the substances them-

selves. This, (let him imagine other intrinsically valuable substances to be there, and the figure will be complete,) this is no bad emblem of the kind of union that exists in the Church, and the kind of freedom it enjoys from parties and heresies. Even when mechanically *one*, you can see something of the heterogeneous character of the substances that form the 'united mass;' but when the sun dissolves the force that unites them, the impossibility of their natural cohesion is evinced. So in the Establishment. There is much *now*, to shew to those who will either observe or reflect, what *that* is, whose oneness is so lauded; but, if any thing were to dissolve the *force* by which its discordant parts are held in adhesion, it would then be seen of what contending materials it is composed, and how 'contrary the one to the other,' are many of those 'ministers of Christ,' and 'undoubted successors of the apostles,' at whose feet the writer now quoted sits so delightfully."—pp. 77, 78.

We scarcely remember to have met with any illustration which combines more wit, originality, and truth, than this. No. III. is entitled "Cursory Remarks," relating to some expressions in the Letter to a Dissenter, and embraces a large quantity of somewhat miscellaneous matter. The first of these Cursory Remarks, which, to say truth, is rather long for an annotation, contains a discussion of the subject of ecclesiastical endowments. To this, from a great part of which we are compelled to dissent, we shall subsequently direct the attention of our readers. In the succeeding notes, the author remarks upon the two Societies for the Promotion of Ecclesiastical Knowledge, and on the unfair, Jesuitical spirit of the *British Magazine*; and discusses the question of the obligation of adhesion to the New Testament in the ordinances and management of our churches.—No. IV. is occupied with a letter from a friend of the Author's, in which it is proposed to discuss the following question: "Of what modifications is the system of Con-

gregationalism susceptible, that may adapt it to the general circumstances of society." The object of this letter seems to be the exposure of certain supposed inconsistencies between the principles and the practice of Congregationalists, and the exhibition of sundry alleged defects or weak points in the Congregational theory, with a view to their correction and removal. We do not enter further, at present, into the details of this letter, as we propose to consider it more fully in a subsequent number; but we shall not disguise our opinion that many of its positions are altogether inconsistent with and destructive of the fundamental principles of Protestant Dissent.

(To be continued.)

The Incarnation of the Eternal Word. By the Rev. Marcus Dods, Belford. 8vo. pp. xii. 573. Seeley and Sons.

The Sinless Perfection of Christ's Human Nature vindicated; being a refutation of the Unscriptural Doctrine held by some popular Divines of the present day, relative to the Humanity of the Son of God. By a Member of the University of Oxford. 8vo. pp. 43. Nisbet; Hatchard; Seeley and Sons.

"WHO shall declare his generation?"—This inspired inquiry, designed to set forth the necessary incomprehensibility of the Messiah's glory, ought to put an effectual check on all rash speculations, and to have engendered a spirit of profound submission to the revealed testimony of God. There are certain plain and simple statements made in the Bible, concerning the incarnation and person of Christ, which cannot easily be misunderstood, and which ought to be "most surely believed among us;" but all beyond is unsearchable mystery, over which God has drawn a veil that we cannot lift, and which forbids all our vainly curious penetration.

"Secret things belong to the Lord our God; but things that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever."

In making known to us the doctrine of his own glorious being, God has required of us the exercise of strong faith. Along with the most unequivocal and frequent declarations of the Divine unity, the Scriptures teach the existence of three distinct personal subsistences in the Godhead. They designate these personal subsistences by distinct names; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But they are wholly silent as to the nature and mode of their existence, and of the mutual relation which subsists between them; this only do we learn, that they are distinct, yet united: three persons, but one essence. A little closer attention to the inspired page teaches us that they are essentially and unchangeably "equal in power and glory," whilst there is an official primacy and subordination marking their divine operations, and pervading their relations toward the creatures. But when we proceed to inquire, "How can these things be?" we receive no answer. That which is "written" bears undeniable proof of its divine origin; we are bound, therefore, to believe it because it "is written," but we have no right to pry into that which is concealed. And the history of all human speculations on this matter, more than justifies the admonitory cautions of the word of God. All, at least, that we have read about the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Spirit, has only seemed to "darken counsel by words without knowledge," and to tend only to "corrupt men from the simplicity that is in Christ." Nay, more—all the error and infidelity

which have obtained on the doctrine of the Trinity, may be referred to the rash and unprofitable speculations of inquiring and curious minds; prompted sometimes by pure motives, but more frequently, by pride of heart, and unwillingness to submit to the teaching of God.

The same general remarks apply to the person of Christ. Nothing is more obvious than that two natures belong to him. If the "fashion of a man," in which he appeared and lived; if the recorded events of his life; if the human accidents of hunger and thirst, weariness and pain, joy and grief; if the testimony of men who were always with him, in public and in private, by night and by day; if the undeniable fact of his death, attested even by his enemies;—if these and other similar circumstances do not prove that he was a man, in the strict, and proper, and ordinary sense of that term, no proof can be adduced of the reality of human existence at all. And, if the possession of attributes which belong essentially to the Godhead, and which are in their own nature incommunicable; if the performance of works peculiar to the Deity, and which lie not within the possible range of limited power and derived existence; if the ascription of divine names, and titles, and honours, in terms the most express and unequivocal, and with the greatest frequency; if the unhesitating reception of divine worship when he was upon earth, worship, which when it has sometimes been offered to holy men, has been refused with an indignation worthy of their jealousy for the divine glory; and the presentation of such worship in heaven, by all the holy inhabitants of the worlds above, and this too in

obedience to a divine command, do not prove the strict and proper deity of Jesus, that of the Father himself cannot be substantiated by any species of scriptural argument. Yet these two natures form but *one person*. They are still distinct, there is no mixture, no change; the one is not swallowed up in the other; but there is such a communion of properties, and offices, and operations, that some things peculiar to the divine nature, or to the human, are ascribed, in the general, to his whole person, and things peculiar to each are united in the same descriptions of his glory. He is never spoken of as two persons, but one. *How* this is we cannot tell. The Scriptures make known the fact; "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" this is the mysterious revelation of God concerning his Son; it has no parallel, there is nothing with which it can be compared; it admits of no explanation; we are bound to receive it as the testimony of God; but it is at once useless and sinful to inquire into the modes and circumstances of the Incarnate Personality; God has reserved this with himself.

The birth of Christ presents the same peculiarity. It comes not within the ordinary laws of nature. The mother of Jesus was an unmarried virgin; he had no father. The production of his human nature is thus ascribed to the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost; "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Thus was it provided that the Saviour of sinners should be, in a sense peculiar to himself, "the seed of the woman;" and that sanctified

in the very act of his conception, he should be free from sin. But if we seek any explanation of all this, it is not furnished, and our curiosity is again forbidden to search into it.

To the indulgence of the one or other of these evil dispositions,—a careless spirit, which neglects what God has been pleased to reveal, or an over-curious spirit, which strives to know what he has not seen fit to disclose, may be referred all the errors which have obtained respecting the person and incarnation of the Son of God, “from the first day till now;” from the earliest ages, when the Gnostics denied his proper humanity, to this present time, when Socinians deny his divinity, and the followers of Irving proclaim with awful blasphemy the sinfulness of his human nature.

The sinlessness of Christ’s human nature is a most important doctrine of revelation; and we will add, there is no doctrine which is more plainly revealed.—“*In him is no sin; “tempted like as we are, yet without sin;” “such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;” “who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”* How, in direct opposition to such statements as these, any man of sound mind, and honest heart, entertaining any sincere regard to the inspired testimony, can seriously and deliberately avow that to our Lord’s human nature, considered as apart from him, in itself, are to be attributed sinful properties, dispositions, and inclinations, we are quite at a loss to determine. We would be slow to judge our brother; we would fain think charitably. Some of his statements are ambiguous; and we have sometimes hoped that he has mis-stated his own ideas; but

others of them are so plain as to forbid this hope; we must leave it, and content ourselves with again denouncing the errors, and warning the church against them.

Both the works which are placed at the head of this article, have been written in opposition to this monstrous notion of “the sinfulness of our Lord’s humanity.” Mr. Dods is a minister of the Church of Scotland, and the pamphlet is from the pen of a member of the University of Oxford. Mr. Dods’ Treatise is no ordinary book. It is a large octavo, filled with various and valuable matter, all tending to set forth the spotless purity of the Incarnate Son of God. The whole question, as it bears on the scheme of Mediation, is fully gone into, and ably treated. The Scripture testimony is prominently brought out, and the judgment of the primitive church concerning the human nature of our Lord is fully declared; commencing with Barnabas, the eldest of the apostolic fathers, and closing with Chrysostom, (no mean name nor every-day man,) who died, A.D. 407. The work is as judicious as it is elaborate, and deserves to be placed by the side of the writings of Boston, Erskine, Chalmers, and the very best men of the Scotch Church. Mr. Dods thus states his general design:—

“The doctrine of the Incarnation, so far as it can be understood by man, is sufficiently simple, and might be stated in a few sentences. But while errors are zealously propagated upon the subject, which go very directly to the total subversion of every doctrine of Christianity, a somewhat more detailed view of it seems to be called for, than would otherwise be necessary. I propose, therefore, to give such a general outline of the work of human redemption, and of the offices which Christ executes in the accomplishment of that work, as will enable us to see more distinctly the nature of the Incarnation. In doing this, I shall not fail to notice the bearing of

the observation which may be made upon the question of the sinfulness of our Lord's humanity."

In his "Preliminary Observation," which occupy fifty-five pages of the work, Mr. D. has taken a comprehensive view of the work of redemption in its ultimate design, the developing of the infinite perfection of God, and the securing to him the highest revenue of praise throughout the wide universe, and amongst all orders and classes of intelligent beings; still insinuating, as he proceeds, the impossibility of attaining this end, except in the person of a sinless Mediator. The following passage at the 22d page is truly eloquent:—

"It was when it was declared that fallen man should be saved, and when it appeared not how that salvation could be effected, without casting doubt and distrust over all the perfections of God, unbinging all the principles upon which his moral government was founded, and thus producing the most disastrous and fatal consequences throughout the whole universe, that the great mystery of redemption, into which angels desire to look, and from which they learn wisdom, began to run its mighty course. It was then that the eternal Word was announced as the Redeemer of the fallen race, who should rescue them from their thralldom, and bring them back to holiness, to happiness, and to God. Now in the accomplishment of this work, the Redeemer has three parties to deal with,—him who holds the captives in bondage,—the captives themselves held in bondage,—and him, who for this rebellion, gave them up to captivity: and each of these parties renders the possession of certain powers essentially necessary in the Redeemer. He who holds the captives in bondage, may be determined that they shall not go free for any price, or upon any consideration. The Redeemer, therefore, must of necessity possess powers to compel him to let them go. The captives may be utterly insensible to the misery of their bondage, and unwilling to be delivered. The Redeemer therefore must possess a power to convince them of the misery of their state, and to awaken in their hearts the desire of liberty. The captives may be totally ignorant of the way that leads to the home whence they have been exiled, and

totally incapable of encountering the manifold difficulties and dangers with which that way abounds. The Redeemer therefore, must possess power both to lead them in the right way, and to support, and strengthen, and uphold them against all opposition. The captives may have acquired habits and dispositions which totally incapacitate them for the occupations and enjoyments of the country to which they are to be brought. The Redeemer therefore must possess power to change the whole tenour and current of their habits, affections, and dispositions. The captives may have been driven from home for their crimes, and their return would be an infringement of that law by which they were condemned, a dishonour to the Sovereign by whom they were banished, and dangerous to those of his subjects who never rebelled. The Redeemer therefore must possess a power to insure them a welcome reception; that is, he must bring them back in such a way as to magnify and make honourable the law by which they were condemned,—to display the equity and justice, as well as the goodness and mercy of the Sovereign by whom they were exiled,—to give fresh stability to all the principles of his moral government, and additional security to all his faithful subjects. He must be able to reconcile, and to preserve in the most indissoluble union, these apparently most irreconcilable things, the glory of God, and the safety of the sinner,—to unite, in most harmonious union, these apparent contraries, the mercy that pleaded for the sinner's safety, with the truth that demanded his punishment,—the righteousness that condemned him, with the peace that was promised him. Such are the powers which it is essentially necessary that the Redeemer should possess; or to sum up all these powers in three words, he must be a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, in the highest and most extensive application of these terms. Such powers, it is clear, no created being could by any possibility possess; but such powers were found in the Son. Anointed therefore as the Redeemer of men, he was announced as Prophet, Priest, and King: and the first acts of each of these offices he performed personally. As prophet, he announced to man the hope of deliverance through the 'woman's seed.' As Priest, he appointed sacrifices as typical of his own death for sinners, and clothed our first parents with the skins of slain beasts, instead of their own fig leaves, as a token that he would cover their spiritual nakedness by a righteousness much more effectual than any that they could provide.

And as King he sent them forth to cultivate the ground, until they should return to the dust from which they were taken."

Our author then proceeds to show, that these offices could not be "sustained by a fallen sinful man." This he does at large in three successive chapters. The argument is sometimes unnecessarily extended, and there is danger of its being thought tedious, if not irrelevant, but its comprehensiveness and conclusiveness will be a sufficient justification to every reflecting mind. We must beg the attention of our readers to two or three further extracts from this interesting and instructive volume. Speaking of the death of Jesus, as an exhibition of the evil of sin, Mr. D. says:—

"But what becomes of this demonstration, if Christ was fallen and sinful? His death was then no greater a demonstration of the evil of sin, than our own. He took our sins upon him, and in consequence of the imputation of them, even though he was the well-beloved Son, he was not forgiven, but died for them. But if this assumption of our sins was not the sole ground of his death; if he was bound to die on some other ground besides the imputation of our sins, then the doctrine of imputation itself begins to be doubtful: for we have it only declared in words, but not exhibited in clear and unequivocal action; and moreover, it is vain to look to the cross of Christ for the most decisive and impressive proof that was ever given, of the infinite holiness of God, and hatefulness of sin; for he was only in the situation of an infant, which is fallen and sinful, but guiltless of actual transgression. From the death of such an infant, we learn quite as much of the holiness of God, and the evil of sin, as we learn from the cross of Christ, as if he was fallen and sinful. Under the sanction of such a principle, it certainly cannot be matter of surprise, if the necessity of an atonement should be denied, and sin should be considered as something sufficiently slight, to be abundantly expiated by our sufferings and death. But if we reject the tenet that Christ was fallen and sinful, and died because he was so, then does his cross afford such a fearful proof of the evil of sin, as the uni-

verse never saw before, nor can ever see again."—p. 72.

The same truth is thus placed in another point of light, and its practical importance again declared at the 121st page.

"I need not dwell upon a remark which however it is necessary that I should here make; that if Christ did not die solely as our substitute; if the imputation of our guilt was only partly the cause of his death; if he was a fallen and sinful man, and died of necessity because he was so, then the argument which we draw from the atonement, in proof of the boundless extent of the Divine mercy, in order to lead the mourning sinner to 'peace and joy in believing,' totally fails. The sinner, in such circumstances, it is well known, is peculiarly ingenious in finding out arguments against his title to embrace the salvation offered to him in the gospel. We can triumphantly repel every argument that his fears suggest, against his having ground to hope in the mercy of God, by referring to the cross of Christ. Let it be the cross of a fallen sinful man: let the imputation of our guilt be only one of the causes that placed him there; and it would require but a small portion of that argumentative skill which an awakened conscience never fails to supply, to neutralize, if not to annihilate, every ground of comfort that we can draw from the cross. The death of one fallen sinful man is far enough from proving that God is infinite in mercy, and that all men, however fallen and sinful they may be, may safely rely upon that mercy, nay, may 'come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' The death of a fallen sinful man could never, by any possibility, prove this. The death of Christ does prove it, else it is yet unproved, and our receiving of mercy and grace, instead of being so certain that they may be sought with all holy boldness, rests only upon a peradventure."

Error is always at variance with itself. This is abundantly true of Mr. Irving, and his "doctrine of our Lord's human nature." He strictly maintains that he was born a fallen sinful man, in direct opposition to the angelic announcement, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." He proceeds, however, to teach that the union

of this fallen humanity with the Godhead prevented its sinfulness from appearing in open acts :— "The human nature of Christ was holy through the inworking, or energizing of the Holy Ghost, by the Holy Ghost, under the direction of the Son, enforcing his human nature, inclining it, and uniting it to God." (*Sinless Perfection*, p. 14.) Our readers are at liberty to try to reconcile Mr. Irving to himself if they can; we have abandoned the attempt in despair. We were going to observe, however, that on the only occasion upon which we ever strayed into the new Scotch Church, amongst a multitude of other monstrosities by which we were shocked, was this; that the agony in the garden was produced by the struggle (final and successful) of the Incarnate Son of God with the depravity of his fallen humanity; and that the result was the total eradication of its sinfulness by the power of the Godhead, so that he brought it to the cross, a sacrifice "without blemish." Compare this with his oft-reiterated statement that he died "by the common property of flesh to die, because it was accursed in the loins of our first parents;"—were both statements made under the same inspiration?

The argument from general principles is summed up by Mr. D. in his fifth chapter, under the head of "General Remarks." We must close our extracts with the following, which we give as a compendious view of the whole.

"We have thus traced Christ in the discharge of all his offices, of Prophet, Priest, and King. For the discharge of the whole of them, his death, and consequently his incarnation, was essentially necessary. He discharged the duties resulting from these offices from the beginning. He discharged them all during his sojourn on earth. But we have seen that without dying, he could not fully have discharged

the duties of any one of his offices. And at every step we have seen the absolute necessity of the total absence from him of every thing to which the terms fallen and sinful could, in any sense, be applied. We have seen, upon the clearest and most indisputable evidence, that had he been fallen and sinful, his death could have afforded us no more instruction, as to the character of God, than the death of any other man—that it could have been no satisfaction to the divine justice for our sins—and that it must have been the very reverse of a triumph over death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

In the remainder of the volume will be found much that is valuable on most, if not all the points, on which a variety of opinion has prevailed relative to the doctrine of Christ's Person. There is a sermon from another pen, introduced at the 390th page, on Heb. iv. 15., which our author very properly characterizes as a "sound, and clear, and able view of the certainty with which we may rely upon the sympathy of Christ in all our trials and temptations, and of the confidence with which we may depend upon his power to deliver us, without any necessity for supposing him to be fallen and sinful."

We are not prepared to pledge ourselves to every statement contained in this volume, and still less, to every mode of statement; but its general excellence is great, and to all who are wavering, or who desire the opportunity of seeing the subject of the Incarnation fully discussed, and especially in the particular of the assumption of sinless humanity, we cordially recommend it as altogether worthy of attentive and careful study.

As a pamphlet, that of the Oxonian divine has considerable merit. It is a valuable digest of the argument in all its chief points and bearings, and will well repay a deliberate and candid perusal. It discovers considerable skill in detecting the sophistries of error;

the style is perspicuous, and the spirit benevolent; for the sake of the truth, we thank the writer for furnishing the public with so good a compendium, on terms which place it within the reach of all. The several points taken up are the following:—

Every nature proceeded from the Creator without moral defect.—Had Christ assumed *fallen* humanity, it could not morally, and in the best sense, be said that he assumed *proper* humanity; sin is a defect.—In order to be *like* us in our nature, it was not necessary that likeness should extend to our *corruption*.—The miraculous formation of the body of Jesus implies that he was possessed of *inherent holiness*, and that human nature in him, was placed precisely in the *same condition* as before the fall. It was the immediate product of divine power, and must therefore have been a *perfect* and *holy* work; as indeed it is every where declared to be.—It was not necessary that Christ should have assumed *fallen* humanity, that he might be capable of *sympathizing* with his people.—The *temptations* of

Christ do not show that his nature was *fallen*.—The *circumcision* of Christ is no proof of *fallen* humanity.—The purity of Christ's humanity is strongly evinced in the reply of John to our Lord on his presenting himself to baptism.—His being made *under the law* does not prove that he had assumed a *sinful* nature; for the law does not presuppose (as it is asserted) a *sinful* condition.—The excellencies of *unfallen* humanity in Christ were all *necessary* to his effectual *performance* of the work of *redemption*; and the consequences of viewing Christ as partaking of *fallen* nature are *fatal* to his whole redeeming work.—The *mortality* of Christ's human nature does not prove it to have been a *sinful* substance.

We cannot better close this article, than in the closing words of this able pamphlet:—

"It is habitual sober-mindedness which marks the steady Christian, and not heated imagination and declamatory boasting. He has no love for the regions of speculation, where many wonder and are lost; but his delight is in the temple of truth, in the law of God, and among the understanding in heart."

NEW PUBLICATIONS, WITH SHORT NOTICES.

The existing Monopoly an inadequate Protection of the authorized Version of Scripture. Four Letters to the Bishop of London; with Specimens of the intentional, and other Departures from the authorized Standard. To which is added, A Postscript, containing the "Complaints" of a London Committee of Ministers on the Subject; the Reply of the Universities, and a Report on the Importance of the Alterations made. By Thos. Curtis, Sec. pp. 116. Effingham Wilson.

This important pamphlet treats of a
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subject that is deeply interesting to every Bible Christian. We had intended to have made it, with other documents, the basis of some lengthened observations. These, however, the crowded state of our pages has compelled us to defer till our next Number, and, in the mean time, we think it right to say, that the allegations of Mr. Curtis must not be treated with neglect, either by the Universities that print, or those Societies that circulate, "the authorized version."

Tracts. By Valentine Ward. 24mo. The Way of Peace and Safety made Plain: Two Sermons on the Forgiveness of Sins, and the Spirit's Witness, pp. 20 and 35; an earnest Address to Parents and Teachers on the right Training of Children, pp. 67; the Character of a Good Minister, pp. 53.

OUR readers need not be informed that Mr. Ward belongs to that active and zealous body of Christians, the Wesleyan Methodists, amongst whom he has laboured for many years with great success. Although we are not prepared to subscribe to every statement contained in these tracts, and still less to every mode of expression, we can, notwithstanding, cordially recommend them to the perusal of our readers as containing a large portion of Scriptural truth on several interesting and important subjects.

In the first two tracts Mr. W. has done much to promote clear views of the Divine Witness to the fact of human forgiveness and acceptance. We admit that it is *not a man's neighbour, nor his minister, nor his conscience, nor the Word of God*, that is the author of this witness, but the "Spirit of the living God;" and, so far as we understand Mr. W.'s reasoning on this point, we agree with him, that the Holy Spirit bears witness in the fruits of the "Spirit," and that he does so pre-eminently in "the love of God shed abroad in the heart," as one of the most clear and blessed effects of his gracious influence. But we do not think that Mr. W. is sufficiently explicit on the point that the Spirit's witness is made "*with our spirits*," rather than *to* them, and that it consequently implies the instrumentality both of the *Word of God*, which may be either written or preached, and of the believer's own *conscience*, which must be employed in ascertaining and assenting to the evidence of divine influence on the heart. We are persuaded that Mr. W.'s views are clear and correct on this point, but we think he has not succeeded in stating them clearly. Our fear is, that some persons would rise from the perusal of his tract still deluded by the idea that the Spirit's witness is a direct testimony, amounting to revelation, im-

parted to the mind. This Mr. W. can easily alter in another edition.

If our brethren of the Wesleyan Denomination, for whom we entertain the most sincere regard, and for whose success in their Christian labours we devoutly give thanks unto God, would render themselves more familiar with the writings of our best divines, with the preaching of our accredited ministers, and we may add, with the sentiments of our body, with at least so few exceptions as to be unworthy of notice, they would never utter, much less write, such sentences as the following:

"Nor do we find this heaven upon earth guaranteed to a company of favourites, who without any cause or reason implying personal responsibility, have been inevitably chosen to its possession, while all the rest of mankind have been left to perish without remedy, although many of them have the mockery of an invitation to partake of a feast, which was never provided or intended for them. All that the Scriptures teach us concerning the character of God, the terms in which they speak to us of the design of Christ's death; the words of the apostolical commission; together with the invitations and promises contained in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, are most demonstrably and powerfully at variance with the horrible sentiment."

We think so too, Mr. Ward, and are at a loss to know how you can be ignorant that this is the case!—Mr. W. proceeds:

"And, however much we respect many of the individuals who hold the tenet here exploded, regarding it as not only untrue, but also of direful influence, we must not allow our feelings of respect for our fellow-worms, nor any other feelings, to prevent us from occasionally pointing out its falsehood, absurdity, and malignity. It is therefore with peculiar pleasure, that we announce to you, without fear of successful contradiction, that if you enjoy not the Spirit's witness, it is not on account of any unwillingness on the part of God to bestow it, or because of any decree, either secret or revealed, against you personally, but on account of an evil, the non-removal of which is your fault and not your misfortune."

We thank Mr. W. for his feelings of personal respect; but must take

leave again to assure him, that the sentiments of the last quoted sentence are entirely in unison with our own; that the whole course of our ministry testifies to this fact; and that Mr. W. may satisfy himself of the truth of our assertion any Lord's-day, by visiting any of our places of public worship. And sure we are, that whilst Mr. W. will find our ministers delivering the call of the Gospel as universally as himself and his brethren, and charging the guilt of an impenitent and unpardoned state as fully to the unrepenting and unbelieving sinner as he would do, and labouring as sincerely to overcome the mistaken notions and proud opposition of the heart to the terms of God's mercy; we shall find him and the esteemed ministers of the Wesleyan body, as clearly and fully as ourselves ascribing the salvation of believers to divine grace, and admitting, that whilst faith is the act of man, "it is the gift of God." The difference between us is more in *words* than in *things*.

We had intended an extract or two from the "Address to Parents and

Teachers," with which we are altogether much pleased, but we have already exceeded our proposed limits. "The Character of a Good Minister," contains many plain and valuable hints.

The Portfolio, containing Extracts from the writings chiefly of the Old English Divines. 12mo. half-bound, pp. 388. Nisbet.

THESE Extracts, from the best authors of the olden times, are so arranged as to supply a page for every day in the year. They are the result of very extensive reading, and indicate a truly spiritual taste in the mind of the Selector. The volume will be additionally interesting to many readers, as it contains a considerable number of short passages that were taken from the lips of the late excellent Mr. Howels. A very full index of subjects and authors is added, and we doubt not, but those pious persons who love a hand book near them, profitably to occupy their vacant moments, will find this a very agreeable and instructive companion.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

WORKS AT PRESS, OR IN PROGRESS.

Preparing for publication, by the Editors of the Congregational Magazine, a work on CONGREGATIONALISM; to contain a sketch of its history; an exposition and analysis of its principles; a comparative view of its advantages and disadvantages; a candid discussion of the modifications of which it may be thought susceptible; a full account of the ecclesiastical usages of the Congregationalists; with an Appendix, containing statistical and financial tables in illustration of the former part of the work, and a careful reprint of all the most valuable and scarce documents connected with the history of the Congregationalists.

The Sinfulness of Colonial Slavery; a Lecture delivered at the Monthly Meeting of Congregational Ministers, at Dr. P. Smith's Meeting-house, by Rev. R. Halley.

The Private Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, considered as an example to all his Disciples, and a Demonstration of his Mission. By Thomas Williams, Author of "The Age of Infidelity," Editor of "The Cottage Bible," &c. &c. Price 7s.

The Cabinet Annual Register, and Historical, Political, Biographical, and Miscellaneous Chronicle for 1832; embellished with Medallion Portraits of their present Majesties, comprising an impartial Retrospect of Public Affairs, Foreign and Domestic—Summary of Parliamentary Debates—Chronicle of Events and Occurrences—Important Trials, &c.—Abstracts of the Reform and other important Acts—Biographical Sketches of distinguished personages who have died during the year—Public Documents—List, Tables (including the members of the Reformed Parliament), Patents, &c. Price 8s.

An Introduction to the Study of English Botany, with a Glossary of Terms, by George Banks, F. L. S. 8vo. 37 plates, containing upwards of 300 engravings. Price 9s.

On Self-possession in Preaching. An Address delivered to the Students of the Blackburn Academy, by the Rev. E. Parsons, of Leeds. Price 1s.

In a few days, A Letter of Reply to "Johnes' Essay on the Causes which have produced Dissent in the Principality of Wales," which obtained the Royal Medal in 1831.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL DISSENTERS.

Congregational Union of England and Wales.

THE Committee of the Union, immediately after the general meeting in May, 1832, took into consideration a suggestion made at the close of the meeting, respecting the establishment of a Fire and Life Assurance Society, to be confined to our own denomination. After several meetings of the Provisional Committee on the subject, it was ascertained, that the risk attending the establishment of a new Fire Assurance Society would be too great to justify the attempt. This part of the suggestion was, therefore, abandoned. The other branch of assurance, however, presented so many powerful claims on their attention, that they persevered in obtaining extensive information, and professional opinions on the subject. The result is now published for the consideration of the Ministers and Churches of our denomination. It is hoped that, on the whole, the plan will meet with extensive patronage and support. The Committee will, however, be most happy to receive the friendly suggestions of those interested in the accomplishment of the desirable object now before them; and they trust that the Secretaries of the various County and District Associations in the kingdom will make a point of introducing the plan to the notice of their brethren at their Spring meetings. They would impress on the minds of all concerned, that the *efficiency*, if not the *success* of the plan, will much depend on the *prompt* communications which they may receive from the country previous to the general meeting of the Union in May next, when it is hoped the proposed Assurance Society may be instituted.

By order of the Committee,

ARTHUR TIDMAN,
JOSEPH TURNBULL, } Secretaries.
JOSHUA WILSON,

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS' MUTUAL ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

PLAN.

ARTICLE I.

To establish three classes of Assurance for the benefit of Congregational Ministers and their Families, viz.

CLASS A.—By an annual premium in advance, to provide a certain sum or an annuity, receivable by the Minister assured, when he shall have attained a specified age.

A Minister's wife may be assured on similar terms.

The annuity, in no case, to be entered on until the party shall have been insured fifteen years.

N.B. If the party assured die before the time specified for entering upon the annuity, then the premiums which

have been paid may be returned, according to the following plan:

Two tables of premiums to be calculated for this Class. Table I. of premiums to be paid for the return of the annual payments, in case the party assured die before the commencement of the annuity: Table II. of premiums to be paid, in case of the contingency of entering upon the annuity or not. Thus if a minister, aged 30, insure for the annuity of £10. upon his reaching the age of 60, and it should be stipulated that, in case he die before the commencement of the annuity, the premiums paid should be returned, the rate of premium, by Table I., would be about £2.0s. 7d. per annum: If no such stipulation be made, but the

usual contingency of life be taken, the rate of premium, by Table II., would be about £1. 9s. 3d. per annum.

CLASS B.—To enable Ministers, on payment of an annual premium in advance, to insure for a given sum or an equivalent annuity, in either of the following cases:

1. On the decease of the Minister, the reversionary sum or annuity to be receivable by his *representatives*.

2. For the sum, &c. to be receivable by his *widow* during the remainder of her life.

3. For *himself*, during life, if left a widower.

4. A sum or annuity payable on the death of *either* himself or his wife.

5. For the same, payable on the death of the *survivor* of them.

CLASS C.—By an annual premium paid in advance, to provide for the payment of a certain sum, or a temporary annuity, to a Minister on his son or daughter attaining the several ages of seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years.

N.B. Should the assured children die before the attainment of the ages specified, the premiums to be returnable as under Class A.

ART. II.

The rate of premiums to be the same, in general, as those charged by the established and most respectable Assurance Offices in London.

ART. III.

The Society to assure lives of Congregational Ministers being ordained and accredited by the denomination; affording satisfactory evidence of not being afflicted with any disease calculated to shorten life. Peculiar cases must be provided for by special agreement.

ART. IV.

A capital of £5000 to be raised by *voluntary contributions*, and vested in the hands of Trustees, half of whom shall be Ministers.

†† This fund will be requisite to meet the contingencies inevitably attendant upon the establishment of an Assurance Society. If, however, the number of members immediately commencing assurance amount to four or

five hundred, it is probable that this fund will remain untouched; but should it be necessarily diminished, upon the first occasion of dividing the profits of the Society, one half of the remaining capital shall be applied toward the reduction of the premiums of the first five hundred members of the Society; and the other moiety of such capital shall be transferred to the Trustees of the Auxiliary Benevolent Fund, to be hereafter raised according to Art. VI. of the general plan.

ART. V.

A periodical division of profits shall be made for the benefit of the members of the Society only. The state of the Society's affairs shall be ascertained by two experienced Actuaries every five years at least; but no division of profits shall take place till after the *second* valuation.

ART. VI.

An Auxiliary Benevolent Fund, to arise from donations, annual contributions, bequests, and congregational collections, for the purpose of assisting those Ministers who may require that aid in the payment of their annual premiums. In no case shall any Minister be entitled to receive from this fund more than *half* the amount of his annual premium.

This fund to be quite distinct in its management from the other affairs of the Society.

†† Those Ministers who may make collections toward this fund shall be eligible to receive one half of the amount of the said collections toward the payment of their premiums should their circumstances require it.

ART. VII.

The business of the Society shall be managed with a strict regard to economy. All important differences arising out of the affairs of the Society to be referred to arbitration.

Peculiar Advantages attending the preceding Plan for the Congregational Ministers' Mutual Assurance Society.

I. It embraces *all* the important contingencies of a Minister's life and domestic circumstances. *E.g.*

1. It provides for his old age, imme-

diately that he is incapacitated for his usual duties;—thus relieving his mind from anxiety on this point, and preventing him from becoming a burden to the church or his friends. This arrangement will be felt as a great relief, both to the aged Minister and the church over which he has presided; as he may gradually or immediately retire from his charge, and the vigour of the ministerial office may be maintained by the introduction of a younger man. The consequent benefit to the church is apparent.

2. It provides for a wife, widow, child, or relative of a Minister, who may wish to make such a provision for those dear to him, and who, by his decease, might, otherwise, be left destitute or dependent on charity.

This may be done, either by a certain *proportional sum*, receivable at once, on the death of the assured, or by an *annuity* receivable for the remainder, or a portion of the remainder, of the life of the nominee.

3. It provides for the *education, apprenticeship, and settlement* of a Minister's children.

A sum of money, or an annuity determinable for a limited period at the several ages of seven, fourteen, and twenty-one years, may be receivable on payment of an annual premium; and thus a source of great anxiety to a Minister of straitened income will be removed.

This part of the plan will co-operate with the Congregational schools for the *sons* of ministers, and may lead to similar institutions for their *daughters*; as, a sum of money may be receivable, when a child reaches *seven or nine years* of age, say £100, which sum being paid into the hands of the Treasurer of the Congregational School, an *undertaking* might be given to educate and maintain the child until *fourteen years* of age; or an *annuity* of £20 might be secured by the Minister for *five or seven years*, to be receivable by the Congregational School for the same purpose, as above mentioned.

The same arrangement may be made for a child on reaching the age of *fourteen*, and a sum of money may thus be secured for the *apprenticeship* of a child: and further, for a small annual premium, an additional sum

may be receivable by a child on reaching the age of twenty-one, for the purpose of establishing himself in life.

Thus, for a small annual payment, a Minister's son or daughter may be entirely provided for, until the period when a parent's charge naturally terminates. During the first period of *seven or nine years*, indeed, the payment will be *additional* to the maintenance of the child: but, after that time, the only *necessary* expense of the child will be the annual premium: thus the Minister will be most seasonably relieved from the anxiety and difficulty of providing for the *increasing* expense attendant on the advance of his child toward maturity.

4. The Society undertakes to assure generally the lives of *accredited* Congregational ministers. See Art. III. of Plan.

This may be thought to be a hazardous proposal, and to offer too great an advantage to the assured: but it arises out of the circumstances of the case. It is of great moment that *all* the contingencies of importance, relative to a Minister's life, should be provided for; as he has, in general, no other means of so providing but from the assistance of friends; and, as the intention of the Society is solely to benefit Ministers, and not to make profits for capitalists and others, if that class of lives be rejected by this Society which is usually rejected by others, a considerable proportion of our Ministers and their families will be left to suffer from a cause which more especially calls for sympathy and care: the robust may be safely left to care for themselves; but the weakly must be cared for. However, in general, the lives of our ministers are, technically speaking, "*good lives*," as they are so morally and spiritually: and a participation in the benefits of this Assurance Society would tend to make them *still better* lives; as care and anxiety—that canker-worm of health and peace—would, in a great degree, be precluded. Health being promoted by tranquillity of mind, the faithful servants of Christ would "*gird up their loins*" to the work of the ministry, with redoubled vigour and zeal; and, being less distracted with the affairs of this life, would be more enabled to

"please Him who hath called them to be his soldiers," and who hath also commanded that they should "not go to this warfare at their own charges." Moreover, the Society could afford to do this, as their *indiscriminate* lives would be better, on the whole, than those on which the tables are calculated by the Assurance Societies: nay their lives, are, on the whole, better than the *selected* lives of other Societies, which are those often of persons not temperate, sober, moral, and religious, as our ministers almost exclusively are.*

The tables of the offices are calculated on the decrement of human life *indiscriminately* among a given number of persons; and the premiums are regulated accordingly. *But the offices will not insure lives indiscriminately. They select their lives with care, and reject the chances of mortality, retaining those of life only;* while they charge premiums calculated on the chances of mortality *indiscriminately*. Their premiums are therefore, *higher* than they ought to be; but if our premiums were to be the same as theirs, they would not be too high, as they would be adjusted to good lives taken *indiscriminately*. The Ministers assured in this Society would thus enjoy a manifest and great advantage over all persons assured in other offices. Indeed it becomes daily more questionable whether a Minister of our denomination in the full discharge of his duties, with earnest zeal for the glory of God in the world, can be admitted to insure his life in the Offices. An instance of refusal lately occurred, wherein a Dissenting Minister on proposing to insure his life in a London Office, was examined by a physician of eminence; who, on feeling his pulse and ascertaining that he preached thrice on the Sabbath, and twice or three times in the week, advised the Office not to assure his life; alleging those reasons as sufficient to stamp him as "a bad life." The only refuge, therefore, which remains to our Ministers, is to enter into a comprehensive Society for the mutual assurance of themselves and families;

* The average lives of 350 of our ministers during the last 40 years, is ascertained to be 58½ years.

and thus secure to *themselves* all the legitimate profits and advantages which mutual assurance is from experience found to yield to the various classes and habits of the community.

II. It will place all the Ministers assured in equal circumstances as if assured in other Societies, and, in some respects, will afford them superior advantages: *e.g.*

1. It will give them all possible benefit which the nature of assurance can give them. All the different points of advantage proffered in various Societies are here comprehended in one plan; and they will all participate *proportionally* in the profits, as assured lives. The Society is framed wholly for *their* benefit with their families.

2. It will enable the wealthier Ministers to assure their lives on equal terms with any other persons in the kingdom, and will afford them, at the same time, an opportunity of contributing to promote the interests of their poorer brethren, by augmenting the profits of the Society.

3. It will, by possibility, provide for the comfort of every Congregational Minister in the kingdom; since the poorest and feeblest may participate of the *Auxiliary Fund*, whereby he will be placed on a footing in the Society equal to the most wealthy individual assured, according to his proportion of interest in the Society. And, when this opening is made for its application, it cannot be doubted that a sense of equity and Christian kindness will prompt congregations and individuals to tender that aid, which the fund is designed to draw forth. The Auxiliary Fund will form a voluntary and benevolent stock, for assisting the poorer Ministers; but the application of it to them will not be attended with any painful humiliation, as in some Societies; for, upon due attestation of requiring this aid, they will be *entitled* to it, so far as the fund will allow; and this for the very purpose of giving them a claim in *equity* on the profits of the Society. It is to be understood, however, that this fund shall be kept quite *distinct* from all the other concerns of the Society: shall be under separate management, and not augmented from the business profits of the Society.

III. It will place the congregations of our order in a new and highly advantageous position.

We renounce the principle of an ecclesiastical establishment, as fraught with injury to the cause of true religion. We profess the *voluntary* in opposition to the *compulsory* mode of supporting the ministry and worship of God. But we are not precluded from making those arrangements which are founded in equity, and prudence, and Christian benevolence; and which seem to be imperatively required in renouncing the system of legal endowments, which experience has proved to be a source of abuse and corruption.

The "Auxiliary Benevolent Fund," therefore, opens to the view of our congregations a mode by which, in the most kind, delicate, and effectual way, they may testify their regard for their Ministers, without bringing on themselves any heavy responsibility; the ties of pastoral connexion would thereby be strengthened; the Minister and his flock could look futurity in the face without mutual apprehension: young Ministers would be encouraged by their prospects; respectability would be stamped at once, both on the pastor and his flock; all the advantages of a legal endowment would be conferred on the ministry, and the congregations, without the possibility of abuse; and thus many sources of disquietude, division, and change would be dried up; prosperity, harmony, consolidation, must follow, and thus the walls of Zion will be built higher and stronger. Religion flourishes in proportion to the efficiency of the Gospel ministry: whatever tends to relieve ministers from domestic anxiety, tends also, *ceteris paribus*, to make their ministry more efficient: the proposed Assurance Society certainly tends to relieve them from much domestic anxiety: in proportion, therefore, as it should prevail so would true religion prevail in that connexion in which it is brought to operate.

It would, in fine, be the glory of this Institution, and of the denomination which should adopt it, that a provision for all the principal contingencies affecting life is thereby made for every Minister of the Con-

gregational order in this kingdom; that no accredited brother should be so weak and so poor as to be unprovided for in old age, or his widow and orphan family cast on the precarious charity of strangers. Surely the blessing of him who hath said, "who-soever shall give to you a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, verily he shall not lose his reward," will rest on such an Institution, and on those congregations and their ministers, who are disposed to carry it to the full extent of its operative power.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

Brethren in the Lord—Your communication, through your Secretaries, Messrs. Arthur Tidman, Joseph Turnbull, and Joshua Wilson, intended for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and addressed to me as their stated Clerk, was received in October last. It is matter of regret that it cannot be officially answered by the Assembly until they shall have convened in May next. Knowing, however, that the publication of it would gratify my brethren throughout the United States, I have caused it to be circulated widely in "The Philadelphian" and other newspapers. It has been already perused with lively interest by many thousands of our fellow-citizens, who will congratulate their brethren of the Congregational Churches of England and Wales, on the establishment of a visible and fraternal union, which, doubtless, will do honour to the cause of our Redeemer, and facilitate the co-operation of all concerned, in every good work.

The want of manifest union and fellowship in those who love and intend to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, has too long been the reproach of the visible church, and a ground of triumph to those who discard Christianity. So far as they lawfully can, all the followers of Jesus should not only agree, but *be seen of men to agree*; that their concentrated light, collected from the Sun of Righteousness, may shine on the darkness of the surrounding world, and glorify their Father who is in heaven.

There has been, it is apprehended,

for ages past, more *real unity in heart* among the children of the Host High, than their diversified ecclesiastical denominations, governments, and forms of worship, would lead careless observers, and especially the enemies of the Gospel to believe; for all who are born from above must love whatever of the moral image of their Master they discover in each other. But should we not all unite to hasten on the happy day, when it will be confessed to the world, that in every nation and sect, he who feareth God and worketh righteousness is *accepted* of him, and should not be *rejected* by any Christian man? Should not all Christians be in some way *evidently united* under their one Great Head of redeeming grace and sanctifying influences, and prove to the world, by some established intercourse with each other, that they belong to one family, having been begotten by one Spirit "with the word of truth," and being reconciled to God through the divinely provided atonement?

With you, dear Brethren, the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Reformed Dutch Churches of the United States, have begun to shake hands across the Atlantic. To you, as well as to our Christian brethren in France, and of the Synod of Ulster, we affectionately say, "God speed you in running the race set before you; and may you far excel the American Churches in your efforts to purify Christendom, and convert the world." We would so much love our Saviour and his kingdom, as to rejoice even at being outdone by rival brethren, who may covet earnestly the gifts of benevolence, fidelity, and zeal.

We are sensible, and you will doubtless rejoice with us in it, that the advantages are great, which the Christian people of the United States possess for rendering much service in the cause of Christ. We are free from all civil disabilities, taxation, and constraints, in the exercise of our religion, agreeably to our own judgment of duty; and have the means of widely diffusing knowledge through the untrammelled press, cheap books, magazines, and newspapers free of duty, which, of any size, are quickly carried by the mail, for one cent and a half each, to the extremities of our coun-

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try. The exchange papers of editors are exonerated even from this postage. We may form any associations which we please, and may traverse our land, or leave it, or return to it, without any leave or passport, except from the providence of God. We have schools, academies, colleges, and theological seminaries, for the education of our youth; so that nearly all may gain at least a common English education. We occupy a soil exuberant in its productions; extend our commerce to every continent, isle, and sea; and by the good hand of our Heavenly Father upon us, have been rapidly increased in our population, national resources, domestic comforts, and personal wealth, beyond the example of any other people since the rejection of ancient Israel. American Christians ought, therefore, from gratitude to the Supreme Governor among the nations, to abound in the work of the Lord, and to be foremost in obeying the injunction of our ascending Redeemer, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

It is a pleasure to be able to state, even while we come very far short of doing our whole duty on this subject, that our societies, which aim at converting the world, by the diffusion of the Bible, tracts, missionaries, and religious education, have never been more active, enterprising, and successful in their labours, than during the last year. At the same time, many ministers of the gospel and other pious people, have been led to seek more diligently than formerly, the conversion of sinners in the midst, or in the vicinity, of our established congregations. For two years past from two to five preachers of the gospel have frequently met by invitation of the pastor of some congregation, to continue their public teaching and prayers among his people for several days in succession. In this way, unusual attention has been excited, to the ordinary means of grace, and these labours, with others, have been so abundantly blessed to the Presbyterian Church, that in the year preceding May last, our actual *increase of communicants*, after making allowance for deaths, suspensions, and dismissions, exceeded THIRTY FIVE THOUSAND. For other particulars, permit me to refer to the

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printed minutes of the Assembly, which are sent with this letter.

The proposed exchange of Delegates between your Union and our Assembly, I hope will take place in May, 1834, and sooner, if your Committee could commission two or three persons, who should arrive in Philadelphia next spring, as your Representatives. Any brethren whom you may send in that character I hereby affectionately invite to make my house their home while they may remain in this city. Come, and we will endeavour to make you glad, with the consolations wherewith God has comforted his American Zion.

I remain,

Brethren beloved in our Lord,
Your's in the best bonds,
EZRA STILES ELY,

Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
of the Presbyterian Church in the
United States of America
Philadelphia, November 26, 1832.

LONDON MONTHLY MEETING OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

This ancient service was held on Thursday, Feb. 7, at Dr. Smith's Meeting-house, Hackney. Mr. Halley, the Classical Tutor of Highbury College, preached an eloquent and able discourse on *Colonial Slavery*, from a most appropriate and impressive passage, Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. Dr. Winter and Mr. Blackburn engaged in the devotional services.

We presume the public will be glad to learn that this service now commences at 12 o'clock instead of 11, which we doubt not will enable a larger number of ministers and other gentlemen to attend it in future. Mr. Halley's Sermon is to be printed without delay.

NEW CHAPEL, MONKWEARMOUTH.

On the 16th of December, 1832, a New Independent Chapel, which will accommodate 700 persons, with School Rooms for 150 children, was opened in Monkwearmouth, Durham.

Sermons were preached by R. M. Beverley, Esq. of Beverley; the Rev. J. Orange, of Barnsley; and the Rev. J. Mather, of Beverley. Also on the

17th, by the Rev. E. Parsons, of Leeds. The services were well attended, and the subscriptions, including several sums before the chapel was opened, amounted to £380, chiefly collected amongst the friends of Mr. Watkinson, the minister of the place. The entire cost of the erection will not exceed the sum of £900.

FORMATION OF A NEW INDEPENDENT CHURCH AT HALSTEAD, ESSEX.

On Wednesday, January the 2d, a meeting was held at the barn lately opened for Divine worship at Halstead, when the Rev. John Carter, of Braintree, preached an excellent sermon, from Acts ii. 41, 42. After which, forty-eight members of the old church, and three members of other churches, were united together as a distinct church of the Independent or Congregational order. The Lord's Supper was then administered. The members were afterward requested again to confirm the unanimous invitation they had given to the Rev. Benjamin Johnson, of Highbury College, to become their pastor, when each hand was lifted up, and the meeting separated. About £750. are promised towards the erection of a new chapel.

ORDINATION.

On the 15th August, 1832, Mr. Wm. Howe was ordained pastor over the Independent Church assembling in St. Paul's Chapel, Hindley, near Wigan, Lancashire. The Rev. S. Deakin, of Stand, commenced the services by reading the Scriptures and prayer, in the absence of the Rev. R. S. Mc All, of Manchester, who was detained on the road through the mistake of an individual; the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the usual questions; the Rev. R. Dyson, of Halsehaw Moor, offered up the ordination prayer, accompanied with the laying on of hands; the Rev. Dr. Raffles delivered a most impressive charge to the minister; the Rev. R. Fletcher, of Manchester, preached to the people, and concluded the interesting services of the day with prayer.

NOTICES.

The Association of the Congregational Churches in Dorset will, D. V. be held at Poole, on the Wednesday in Easter week. It is intended that the ordination of Mr. J. M. Mackenzie shall take place on the same day. In

the morning, the Annual Meeting of the Sunday School Union will be held after the Public Breakfast.

The Rev. J. Yockney of Islington, has been appointed by Mr. Coward's Trustees, one of the Friday Morning Lecturers.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE CLAIMS OF DISSENTERS ON THE REFORMED PARLIAMENT.

Our readers are aware that Earl Grey has been informed of those claims which the Dissenters feel it to be their duty to urge upon the attention of Parliament.

It is scarcely probable that His Majesty's Government will themselves originate measures for the relief of the Dissenters as a distinct class, though they may be prepared to recommend the general abolition of Church Rates in England as they have proposed to supersede them in Ireland. The Dissenters, however, can now happily help themselves, as there is scarcely a member in the reformed House of Commons who does not understand their numerical and moral power. Petitions to both Houses, and correspondence with their Representatives, will now therefore become the duty of every Dissenting congregation throughout the kingdom, and to facilitate these efforts we insert a short form of Petition, which embodies the objects for which it is their duty, at the present moment, principally to seek.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of —

Sheweth, That your petitioners, being Protestant Dissenters, acknowledge ever the justice at length rendered to them, and to the cause of religious liberty, by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

But that, while they yield to none of their fellow-countrymen in loyalty to the king, attachment to the constitution, and zeal for the welfare of the state, they continue to be specially oppressed by many evils of which they justly and deeply complain.

And they therefore pray your Honourable House to improve the present system of Parochial Registration, which is highly injurious to them; to exempt from poor's rates all places exclusively appropriated to the worship of Al-

mighty God; to allow marriages to be celebrated otherwise than by the ministers, and according to the forms of the Established Church; to permit funerals to be performed by Dissenting ministers in Parochial burial grounds, without the services of the Common Prayer; and also to relieve your petitioners, who sustain all the charges of their own religious worship, from church rates and ecclesiastical dues, to which they conscientiously and greatly object. And they pray that relief may be afforded to them in these matters by such means as the wisdom and equity of your Honourable House shall direct.

AWAKENING AND REFORMATION AMONG THE ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VAUCLUSE.

Translated from the *Archives du Christianisme*, Second Series, Jan. 26, 1833.

(Extract of a Letter from M. Renous, Protestant Pastor of Lamothe-Chalensou, dated Nov. 16, 1832.)

"A religious emotion, which must be ascribed to the reading of the Bible, has very recently taken place among the Roman Catholics of the town of Malaucène, in the Department of Vaucluse. A short time ago, I was informed that some persons in that town were in the habit of assiduously reading the sacred volume, and that they intended to abjure the errors of the Romish church, in order to embrace the pure religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, being well aware of the fanatical spirit which reigned in the ancient sovereignty [comtat] of Avignon, I entertained doubts of the sincerity of this supposed awakening. It was not till last week that I could obtain a full persuasion that the Spirit of God had been powerfully working in the very midst of darkness and the shadow of death.

"I set out from Lamothe, Oct. 31; and, that I might apply the journey to other attempts at being useful, I went on foot, and arrived at Malaucène in the

afternoon of the next day. As soon as the intelligence became known, a Roman Catholic came to the inn which I had entered, and took me to his own house. There, about twenty persons were already assembled, desirous of hearing the glad tidings of the Gospel. I addressed them upon the great subject; and requested them to attend every day, till Monday, Nov. 5, in our meetings for prayer and exhortation. You are quite unable, my dear brother, to form an exact idea of the earnestness which marked this collection of persons, and of the joy which was painted on their countenances, in listening to the salvation of grace offered to poor sinners believing in the Lord Jesus. Some cried out, in their simplicity of heart, 'O, how good this is! How sweet it is to draw near to God, through Jesus his Son without the coming between of saints, and thus to hear the truth preached without men's trash being mixed up with it!—I continued conversing with these dear friends, on the subject of Christ the Saviour, from five o'clock till about midnight.

"The next day I went to the Mayor's office and presented a writing, signed by thirteen heads of families; in which they declared their firm and fixed intention to live and die in the Evangelical Christian religion, and to form themselves into a Protestant church. By having made this declaration, they are placed under the protection of the law, and are at perfect liberty to establish and maintain their religious services.

"On Nov. 1, 2, and 3, I preached three times each day; the first sermon in a country place, and the other two in the town. The last sermon was devoted to an examination of the erroneous doctrines which, through the perfidy of Rome, have been insidiously brought into the church of Christ. The number of attendants at these meetings constantly increased. On the first day, we had between twenty and thirty, on the last, there were above two hundred, who all manifested the greatest attention in hearing the gospel of salvation.

"And now, may the Lord bless the seed which he has thus cast into places, where probably pure Christianity had never been allowed. I say *never*, for the town of Malacène, being included in the [comtat] of Avignon, in which the Popes fixed their seat from Clement V. to Gregory IX. [1309 to 1377,] has always been and even now is under the dominant influence of the priests. In perfect conformity with this fact, the streets and public places are crowded

with chapels and niches dedicated to saints, male and female; but no where is one to be found, to the true God. Of those places one may justly say, with St. Paul, 'that men, professing themselves to be wise,—have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like to corruptible man;' but the Lord has now caused his day star from on high to arise upon these regions, and that will, by its beneficent rays, soon dispel the thick darkness which has so long reigned there."

DEPUTATIONS FROM THE SCOTTISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

We understand that the Rev. Mr. Brotherton, of Alloa, is expected to be in London, during the month of March, for the purpose of preaching and making collections in behalf of the Scottish Missionary Society. A deputation from the London or the Baptist Missionary Society visits Scotland every year: and our Scottish brethren have manifested much kindness, and contributed with great liberality to these institutions. It is now eight years since the Scottish Missionary Society had a Deputation in London; and we trust that the friends of Missions in the Metropolis and its vicinity will, on the present occasion, contribute to it, with their accustomed liberality, particularly as the funds of the Society are at this moment in a state of extreme depression. For several years, the Expenditure of the Society has greatly exceeded the Receipts; and during the current year, the excess in the expenditure has increased with a rapidity, and to an extent as to form ground for very serious apprehensions. The Directors have long been anxious to extend the scale of their operations; but without increased contributions, it will be impossible for them even to maintain their present Missions. It would be inexpressibly painful were they to be reduced to the necessity of diminishing their efforts for the conversion of the Heathen; and it is to avoid this painful alternative that they now make an urgent appeal to the liberality of their Christian brethren in the Metropolis.

"The Scottish Missionary Society has at present Missions—

In the Russian Empire, where there are two stations—Kerass and Astrachan.

In the East Indies, it has four Missionary stations—Bombay, Bankote, Hurnee, and Poonah.

In Jamaica, it has six Missionary stations—Hampden, Hampstead, Lucea, Cornwall, Carron Hall, and Green Island.

AN APPEAL TO THE INDEPENDENT MINISTERS OF DEVONSHIRE.

It has long been a matter of regret to the pastors of the churches of the Congregational order in Devon, that no method has yet been devised for bringing about that friendly intercourse with each other, which obtains among ministers in many other parts of the kingdom. The question has often been proposed, can no remedy be suggested, no plan devised, for bringing the brethren in this county into closer contact? In order to this, it is desirable that some object involving the personal or relative interests of the brethren should be proposed.

It has been a matter of consideration among some, whether a fund could not be instituted, either for the relief of superannuated pastors, or for the education of the children of ministers, or in the way of annuity for their widows, and out of which fund a moiety of the expenses of travelling to the place of meeting might be defrayed.

The counties of Kent, Gloucester, Northamptonshire, Yorkshire, Suffolk, and others, furnish examples to encourage the ministers of Devon in making the attempt. Would those who think the matter feasible send their names and sentiments on the point by letter, post-paid, to A. B. C. at Mr. Ball's, Bookseller, Fore Street, Exeter. This paper is drawn up by some of the brethren, who feel deeply interested in the measure, and should it be found that their sentiments are in accordance with those of a sufficient number in the county to warrant the convening a public meeting, or taking any further steps, the day and place will be specified in the Evangelical and Congregational Magazines.

ON THE CLAIMS OF THE ASSOCIATE FUND FOR POOR MINISTERS.

To the Editors.—It must be peculiarly gratifying to all who love Zion, to remember that her cords have been lengthened beyond the circle of our large towns, and widely extended among our villages and hamlets. We however did nothing but our bare duty, when we called for and encouraged this extension of the Gospel at home. Conscience and consistency equally required this of us, when our hands were stretched forth to the heathen. But Sirs, have we been as mindful of the devoted and self-denied men, whom we thus induced, by our appeals and prayers, to consecrate themselves to obscure and unrequited labour at home, as of those whom we encouraged to go abroad? We have not, indeed, been too mindful of our zealous mission-

ary, but we are too forgetful of those ministers who live with and for the poor of the land. Many, yea most of them, are emphatically "the poor saints" of our Zion. How could they be otherwise? "Their flocks are in general very poor." If, therefore, we would not witness the extinction of both, the case of these good ministers of Jesus Christ must not be trifled with: for if they are allowed to sink, who will be "baptized for the dead?" If their hold upon our villages and hamlets should be lost, or so relaxed as to become uninfluential, how can the Gospel spread at home? That good work cannot go on, if these good workmen be neglected by the wealthier churches of their brethren: and if the work of *Evangelizing* stop, the wealthier churches cannot prosper, nor any wealthy member of any church expect to enjoy the divine presence, Isa. lviii. It was when the church at Jerusalem distributed to them who had need, as well as continued in the Apostle's doctrine, that "great grace was upon them all." We can only be justified by loving mercy, in this case. We called for a countenanced village labour, and now many of the labourers have nothing like a competency. They know not how to live honestly, and they dare not think of leaving their few sheep in the wilderness. "*I am oppressed, Lord, undertake for me,*" is often the cry of their hearts in secret, although seldom heard from their lips in public. But however uttered, it will enter into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth." O Sirs, let it not enter there as an accusation against us! It is not intended to be so, it need not be so. I have ascertained these melancholy facts from letters addressed to the Committee of the Associate Fund, of which Joseph Procter, Esq. is Treasurer, and the Rev. T. Lewis and J. Yockney, of Islington, are the gratuitous Secretaries. These letters were shown to me (for I have no official connexion with the Society) because I have had access to a small fund sacred to a similar purpose, and on which I placed some of their cases last year. That fund is, however, nearly exhausted, and it cannot be renewed: even the little that remains of it is under an embargo at present.

The Associate Fund is also in a low state; after the last quarterly distributions, amounting to £200, voted to thirty-one ministers, in twenty-two counties, there remained only *eighteen pence* in the hands of the Treasurer, to meet the Lady-day claims. "Tell it not in Gath," nor that we are publishing in the very "streets," that the *voluntary principle* is

both the true glory and strength of the Church. Who can read the following narrative without tears, or without bringing forth fruits meet for repentance? "I called my poor people together," writes a worthy minister, "and after a suitable address, informed them that my circumstances rendered it necessary for me to leave them. Never shall I forget the excitement produced on that occasion. One poor man, a blacksmith, who had hitherto subscribed eight shillings a year, said he would rise earlier, and deny himself, if I would try to stay with them. In the mean time afflictions abounded in our family, and we had no less than five in quick succession. My wife and one child were seized with the cholera. I was ready to cry out with David—'*My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*'"

"One circumstance I cannot omit mentioning, because, while it declares a fact, it goes to show how a gracious God can and does employ instruments to minister unto the necessities of his children. Our table was scantily supplied. One day our butcher's wife called and was very anxious to know why we had withdrawn our custom, adding, that she and her husband were fearing they had given offence; and if so, it was unintentioned. We were under the mortifying necessity of stating that we were already in debt, and were determined to retrench until Providence opened some way to relieve us from our present difficulties. The woman, who is, I hope, well disposed in matters of religion, said, 'I admire your principles, but you must not, you shall not, deprive yourselves of necessities, and if you never pay us, we will forgive you.' But now through your excellent Society's means, I can once more sing of delivering mercy."

I dare not, Sir, trespass further upon your limits. The above is, however,

only a specimen of the documents I have seen. I do therefore hope that the Society will give its claims greater publicity; and that in the mean time, your journal will gain for its worthy objects, what the Congregational Magazine has won for so many, a warm sympathy and prompt assistance.

A FRIEND OF MINISTERS.

RECENT DEATH.

Died on the 12th of January, at Howden, Yorkshire, in the 61st year of his age, the Rev. JOSHUA WILKINSON, for more than 52 years the minister of the Congregational church in that town. This venerable man studied for the ministry under the Rev. Mr. Scott, of Heckmondwike, and was contemporary there with Dr. Robert Simpson, late Theological Tutor, at Hoxton.

When Mr. Wilkinson commenced his public labours at Howden, in 1781, he was compelled to preach in a barn, as his predecessors a Mr. Foljambe, having lapsed into Socinianism, had alienated the Meeting-house, and the little property connected with it. This unhappy victim of error abandoned all the forms of religion, until in his last sickness, when he sent for the parish clergyman. So completely was he reduced that he would have been buried as a parish pauper, had not some dissenting gentlemen undertaken the charge of his funeral. In the year 1795 legal proceedings restored the alienated meeting-house to Mr. W. and his congregation. From that period he has diligently and laboriously discharged his duties, usually preaching four times a week. On Lord's day, January 6, he preached three times with his usual health. He spent the evening of the following Wednesday with a friend, and at night he was seized with apoplexy, and died on Saturday, beloved by his own flock, and respected by all around him.

BRIEF COMMENTS ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE events of the past month, so far as England is concerned, have been of immense importance; foreign news of comparatively little. We shall therefore dismiss the latter in two or three sentences, and then turn to what has transpired at home.

The negotiations concerning HOLLAND and Belgium still remain unfinished; the obstinacy of the Dutch monarch not having been diminished by the disasters of the siege of the citadel of Antwerp.

The war (if war it may be called) in PORTUGAL is still undecided. The last accounts, it is true, have brought intelligence of a successful sortie by Pedro's forces, but yield no hope that the situation of the invader is much less critical than it has long been.

Intelligence has been received from AMERICA that the CONGRESS, with that prompt attention to the alarming situation of Carolina, which the crisis demanded, had resolved upon an immediate mo-

dification of that obnoxious tariff which had nearly plunged the republic into civil war. The duties to which the Carolinians object, it was agreed should be diminished, in a rapidly increasing ratio, so that in a few years they would be almost totally abolished. On the other hand, the manufacturers of the NORTHERN STATES will necessarily feel aggrieved by the repeal of those laws, under the protection of which they have embarked their capital and erected their manufactories. Such is the manifold mischief of one false step in legislation. To retreat is almost as hazardous as to advance. Moreover, it appears that the CAROLINIANS are not satisfied with this demonstration of willingness to meet their demands on the part of Congress, and still display a spirit of angry defiance, which will probably lead to an appeal to arms before the affair is finally settled. We need not say that the proposed measures of Congress take away from the Carolinians their chief ground of complaint, and leave them (should they persist in provoking war) in the simple character of rebels. It is becoming clear that the SOUTHERN STATES would not particularly object to a dissolution of the Union; so opposite, and in some points almost incompatible are their interests from those of the NORTHERN.

Again, the disputes (touching the Indian territory) between Georgia and the Congress are still unsettled, and owing, as it is confidently reported, to the fact of the new President's favouring the cause of Georgia, will be most fiercely litigated. Thus are the legislative and judicial functions of Congress both called in question at once, by two of the States of the Union; demonstrating how indefinitely must have been the powers vested in Congress, and how loose the bonds which hold the Union together.

But let us now turn our eye homewards.

On Monday, Feb. 4, Parliament assembled to hear the King's speech. The chief topics it contained were those respecting Ireland, for which his Majesty's Ministers proposed to apply, simultaneously with an effectual redress of grievances, some strong coercive measures. This last proposal led to a long and warm debate on the "Address," in which the "Repeal" party exerted themselves to the utmost; they were signally defeated, however, the address being carried by a majority of 428 to 49. While we think that the determination to redress effectually all the grievances of Ireland might have been expressed somewhat more strongly, it was certainly highly unreasonable in the opposition not to wait with

patience for a more full disclosure of the designs of his Majesty's Ministers.

On Tuesday, Feb. 12, Lord Althorp brought forward in the Commons, the first part of the ministerial plan of Irish Church Reform, the chief features of which are, that church cess altogether is to cease; that ten out of twenty-two bishoprics are to be abolished; that the income of the Episcopal Bench is to be £70,000 instead of £130,000: that sinecure dignities are to be extinguished; that the bishoprics and all benefices exceeding £200 per annum are to be taxed, for creating a fund to supply the uses of the abolished vestry cess; that the tenants of bishops' lands are to have the opportunity of buying a perpetuity in their leases at a fixed and moderate rate of purchase,—the fund thus created (probably more than two millions and a half) being applicable to secular purposes. This measure is a truly enlightened and liberal one, and was hailed as a pledge of the sincere desire on the part of ministers to correct abuses and redress grievances in Ireland.

On Friday, the 15th, Earl Grey moved, in the House of Lords, for the extraordinary powers which the Ministry deemed necessary for suppressing the disorders and outrages in the sister country. That Ireland is in such a state of tremendous anarchy and commotion as to demand the application of some very rigorous measures, can hardly admit of a doubt. The case his Lordship made out was undoubtedly a strong one, and the bill he asked leave to bring in, and which will soon be through the upper house, is one, it must be admitted, of tremendous severity. The chief provisions are the proclamation of martial law and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in the disturbed districts; that it shall be illegal to attend seditious meetings, or to be out after sun-set, or before sun-rise.

We may be permitted to hope that some of these provisions may be softened during the progress of the bill through the House of Commons, without impairing the efficiency of the measure. At all events, these harsh measures can be but temporary and partial, while the beneficial measures Ministers are passing will be of universal and permanent benefit. At the same time, Ministers must continue to give proof, in a persevering and unsparing reform of abuses, that they ask for this extraordinary extension of power only from dire and inevitable necessity.

On Tuesday, the 19th, Mr. Stanley gave another proof of the good feeling of Ministers towards Ireland, in a plan, developed with the Right Hon. Secretary's

usual perspicuity,) for an entire re-modelling of the oppressive **GRAND JURY SYSTEM**. This measure was hailed with all but unanimous applause, and appeared somewhat to soothe the irritated feelings of the Irish members. Let Ministers vigorously pursue the same course, and they will secure the confidence of the country in their intentions, and its support of their measures.

Not the least interesting declaration of Ministers has been that touching **WEST INDIAN SLAVERY**. Though it was excluded from the King's speech, out of deference, we believe, to the alarm of the West Indian interest, yet Lord Althorp assured Mr. Buxton that it was the intention of Ministers to take the matter up this session. May their measures be such as their whole past lives, and abundant professions give the public a right to expect and demand of them; and let the public, especially the religious public, not bate one jot in their zeal or their efforts in this most righteous cause, till they see the "oppressed go free."

On that deeply important subject, the "**OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH**," incidental discussions have taken place in both houses; but the subject is to be formally brought forward in the House of Commons by Sir Andrew Agnew on the 4th of March. It appears that any application for legislative measures for the purpose of checking the gross and increasing profanation of the "Sabbath," will be met by the strenuous opposition of some of the radical faction; on the absurd ground that it is a violation of the rights of conscience, and, *mirabile dictu*, a curtailing of the comforts of the poorer classes! This is strange sort of reasoning; inasmuch as the universal observance of the Sabbath (which it is manifest would not prevent a single article from being sold which men found it necessary to possess, or which they could afford to buy) would be peculiarly a blessing to those classes, who during the greater part of their existence are doomed to severe and wasting labour.

What our sentiments are on the right

of the legislature to interfere in this matter, and how far that interposition should go, is well known to our readers. It is not many months since we gave full expression to our views on this subject. So far as the Sabbath is a civil institution, designed for the repair of the physical energies of the Commonwealth, so far the legislature has a direct right to interfere, and, if it pleased, to institute a still more frequent observance of the days of public rest than the Sabbath brings with it; not to mention that it is reasonable that each individual should be insured the necessary opportunity, not only for the refreshment of his body, but for the improvement of his mind and the cultivation of religion. To insure this is not to infringe any rights of conscience, but only to secure them to all. Thus far then, the legislature is clearly warranted in giving. To shut the public house is not to compel men to open their Bible. We trust, therefore, that when this matter comes before Parliament, every Dissenting Congregation will vindicate its regard to public happiness and public morals, by vigorously supporting Sir Andrew Agnew.

We trust that they will also show their regard to public morals, not less by a strenuous support of Lord Morpeth's philanthropic measure, (undertaken originally by Mr. Sadler) for regulating the **HOURS OF LABOUR IN OUR FACTORIES**. The full and deeply painful disclosures of the Parliamentary Report on this subject, leave no room to doubt that the vigorous efforts of the legislature should be applied to.

Lastly, let us call upon **DISSENTERS** themselves, while anxious to support all public measures of reform and philanthropy, not to sit down any longer in the supine endurance of their own grievances. They may be assured that their brethren in London are taking measures for a vigorous appeal to Parliament. Let every dissenting congregation through the realms unite with them to do their duty, and we shall soon obtain the privileges we ask.

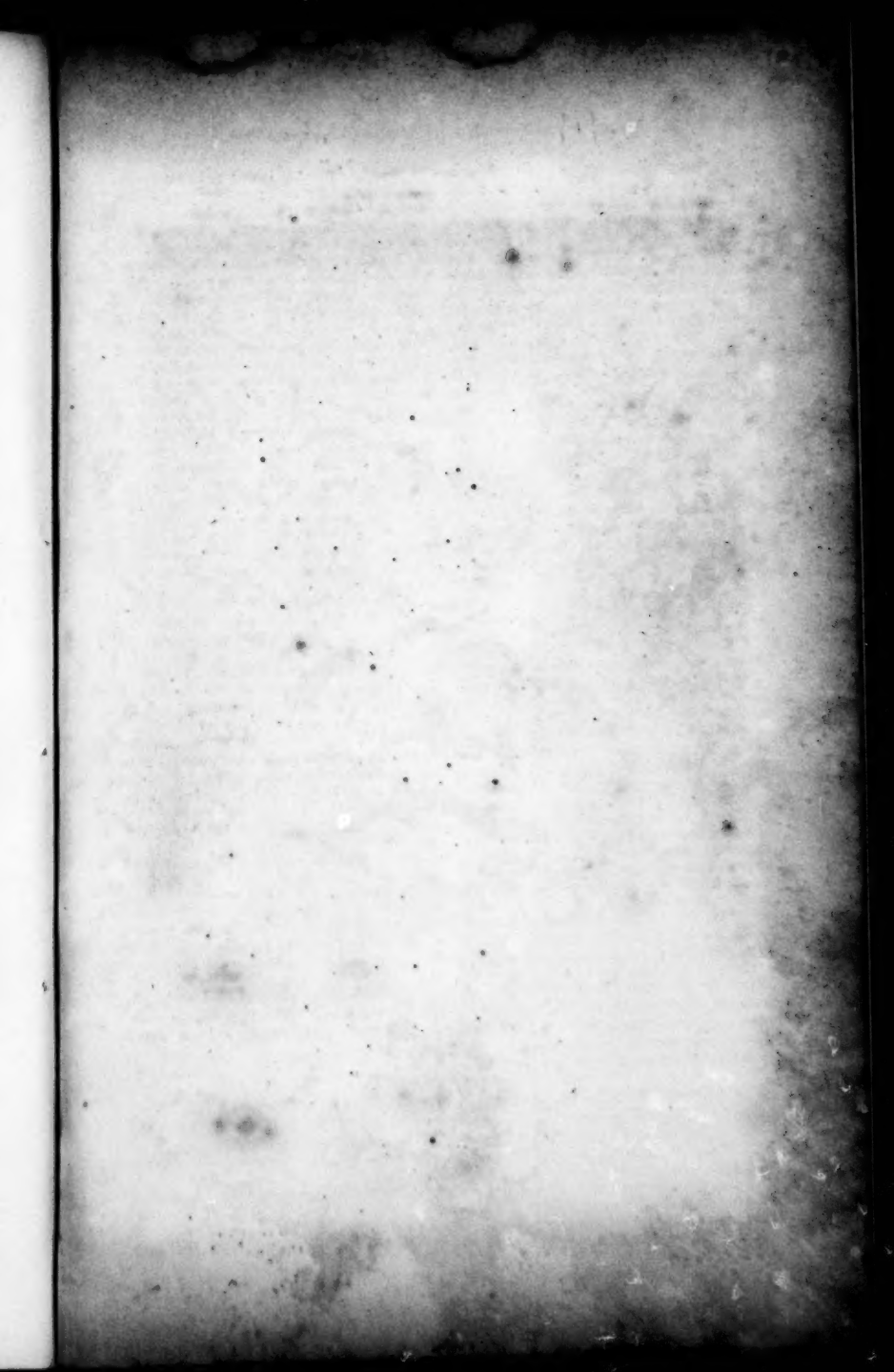
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND MINOR CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received from Rev. J. P. Smith, D.D.—J. M. Mackenzie, A.M.—J. Jefferson—R. Halley—T. Milner, M.A.—J. Turnbull. Also from W. Stroud, M.D.—Non. Con.—B.—R.—W. L. Alexander.—S. Watkins.—Wm. Howe—Wm. Brown, M.D.

By a vexatious oversight of the press, the name of the benevolent founder of Charity Schools, Thomas GOUGE, is printed at page 148 of the present Number, Thomas George. Our readers will oblige us by correcting it with the pen.

The article on "Slavery," and the Report of the Blackburn Academy, were too late for this month.

The April Number will contain Non. Con.'s Portrait Gallery, No. II. "John Milton."





Engraved by W. Hallard after the original Paint by G. Vertue.

JOHN



MILTON.

John Milton

